THE GAIN OF Godlineſs.

BEING

A Conſideration of 1 *Tim.* 4. 8.

By Charles Phelpes.

Can a Man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable unto himſelf? Job 22. 2.

Riches profit not in the day of Wrath: But Righteouſneſs delivereth from Death, Prov. 11. 4.

Godlineſs with Contentment is great Gain, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6.

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TO THE

READER.

Christian Reader,

IT *is a general and neceſſary enquiry of the Sons of Men, which is mentioned by the* Pſalmiſt, *to wit*, There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us *that which is* good? *That which is truly profitable for us?* Pſal. 4. 6. *We All need to be* ſhewn, *what is for our* Benefit, *and to be Directed thereunto; for though* Empty Man would be Wiſe, *yet* Man is Born like a wild Aſſes Colt;

to wit, most void of Understanding, Job 11.12. *with* Psal. 32.9. Every Man is brutish by his Knowledge, Jer. 10. 14. *And this doth Evidently appear by their undertakings and pursuits, whatever their Words and expressions are: For generally they are seeking after the* World, *as their* chiefest good: *And their* Wisdome, *which is Earthly, directs them so to do. It commends unto them, and Glorifies before them, the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of this vain and transitory Life, as the most profitable, and valuable Things which can be pursued, or procured by them; and therefore excites, and provokes them to Labour only, or chiefly, for this Meat which perisheth, for these Objects which endure not unto everlasting Life;* For the things which are seen, are Temporal,

poral, 2 Cor. 4. 18. *Hence the* Wiſe Man *gives this Caution, and Dehortation to the Sons of Men,* Labour not to be Rich; ceaſe from thine own Wiſdome. Wilt thou cauſe thine Eyes to flee upon that which is not? For Riches certainly make themſelves Wings, they flee like an Eagle toward Heaven, Prov. 23. 4, 5. *And indeed, if we could have never ſo ſure, and certain an Enjoyment of them, while we are here continued in this World; which yet we cannot promiſe to our ſelves, or aſſure our ſelves of; yet without all peradventure, when we leave this World, we muſt leave all the things of it behind us:* For we brought nothing into this world; And it is certain we can carry nothing out, 1 Tim. 6. 7. *Be not thou fraid when one is made Rich, when the*

Glory of his Houſe is increaſed: For when he Dyeth, he ſhall carry nothing away, his Glory ſhall not deſcend after him, Pſal. 49. 16, 17, 20. *And Alas! What is our Life? Is it not even a Vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away? Within a few Years or Dayes, we ſhall go the way, whence we ſhall not return*, Job 16. 22. *Yea, though we ſhould Live a Thouſand Years, twice told, and yet have not ſeen, or ſought after that which is truly, eminently, and eternally Good: What will All then avail us, when we go to the* Place appointed for all Living? Will he eſteem thy Riches? No, not Gold, nor all the Forces of ſtrength, Job 36. 8, 9. What is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away

way his Soul? Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? Job 27. 8, 9. What is a Man Advantaged, *ſaith our Lord and Saviour*, if he gain the whole world, and loſe himſelf, or be caſt away? Luk. 9. 24, 25. *The World then, and the things thereof are not* Profitable for all things: *They are not the* good *we ſhould mainly enquire after, or exerciſe our ſelves to the Attainment of: For they are not of the Father*, 1 Joh. 2. 15, 17. *Yea indeed, the inordinate Love of the World, is Enmity with God; and hinders from ſerving and pleaſing Him*; For no Man can ſerve two Maſters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other. Ye cannot ſerve God and mammon, *ſaith*

our Lord Jesus, Jam. 4. 4. *with* Mat. 6. 24.

But now the only Wise God, and our Saviour; and therefore also the only good and gracious God, doth give a satisfactory Answer to that Enquiry *of the* Many, *or Multitude before-mentioned, in* Psal. 4. 6. *As the Prophet signifieth, saying,* He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good; (*what is truly well-pleasing unto him, and everlastingly profitable, & beneficial for thy self*) and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy; and to humble thy self in walking with thy God? *And so to believe in him: For,* Without Faith it is impossible to *walk with, and* please him, Mica. 6. 8. *with* Heb. 11. 5, 6. *and* Gen. 5. 22, 24. *This is* that *which God doth*

doth Require of us, for our Good and Benefit. Compare Mica. 6. 8. *with* Deut. 10. 12, 13. *And ſuitably thereto, the Apoſtle* Paul, *as directed by the Spirit of Truth, ſpeaks in the Words, which are the Subject of the enſuing* Diſcourſe, *ſaying,* Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, *&c. And could Men but be perſwaded, and prevailed withal, to Believe this with all their Souls; How would it* Metamorphoſe, *and Transform their Hearts and Lives, and make them Chriſt's Diſciples; not in Name and Profeſſion only, but in Truth and Reality! But Alas! How many* Unbelieving Believers *are there in the outward Court of the Church; and therefore, how many* Unchriſt-like Chriſtians? (Jer. 9. 25, 26.) *How many are there that ſtand up at, and profeſs to Aſſent, and Conſent to*

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the Belief, *concerning whom it may be ſaid,* They are Children, in whom is no Faith; *as* Deut. 32. 20. *How many call themſelves* The only true Sons of the Church, *while they Actually, and openly appear to be* The Children of this World, *or Members of a* Worldly Sanctuary! *And ſuch manner of perſons may be forward to ſuſpect, That they deſign their prejudice, who endeavour to Moderate their Affections unto, and purſuits after theſe low things; and to excite, and quicken them to exerciſe themſelves unto true Piety and Purity. And* St. Paul *ſaw it needful to Aſſure the Believing* Corinthians, *That he intended no hurt to them, when he Exhorted them to have their Converſation without Careſulneſs, and Covetouſneſs: But that he endeavoured their certain, and ſtable Intereſt*

tereſt and Advantage: *For when he had been ſaying*, Brethren, the time is ſhort; It remaineth, that — they that Weep (*for any worldly Loſs, or Deprivation*) be as though they Wept not; and they that Rejoyce (*for any preſent Gain or Increaſe*) as though they Rejoyced not; and they that Buy, as though they Poſſeſſed not: And they that uſe this world, as not abuſing it; for the Faſhion of this world paſſeth away. But I would have you without Carefulneſs, *&c.* *He then preſently after, thus Writeth unto them*: And this I ſpeak (*not for your Diſadvantage, or Detriment, but*) for your own profit; not that I may caſt a Snare upon you, but for that which is Comely: And that you may attend upon the Lord without diſtraction.

tion. *Signifying, That the waiting, and attending upon him; and so living Piously, and Honestly in this World, will be more profitable for us, than waiting upon, and endeavouring to please the World, as our Lord and Master will be,* 1 Cor. 7. 29, 32, 35. *O then!* Taſt, and ſee that the Lord is good: Bleſſed is the Man that truſteth in him, Pſal. 34. 8, 10. *And as it is very uſeful, and needful for all Perſons ſeriouſly to conſider, that* Piety is the moſt profitable thing *they can practiſe, and exerciſe themſelves unto: So particularly, and eſpecially let* Young Perſons *obſerve, That the Apoſtle excites* Timothy *in his* Youth, *or younger Years, to the purſuit and practiſe of* Godlineſs, *as may be ſeen in* 1 Tim. 4. 7, 8, 12. *That* they *alſo may embrace, and obey that Counſel given to* Timothy; *and*

given

given unto him, That he might, in obſerving it, ſet a good Example before others. And St. Paul charges Titus to Exhort young men to be Sober-minded; to wit, not to let out their Hearts too much unto, or immoderately ſet their Affections upon thoſe things which are periſhing, and momentany. Intimating, That there is a too great proneſs in them thereto, Tit. 2. 6, 7. But it is good for ſuch, who are entring into the World, as ſome ſpeak, to mind, That Pure Religion, is their greateſt, and ſureſt Intereſt; and moſt profitable for them, both for this preſent State, and for that which is to come, Pſal. 34. 11, 15. When Solomon, while he was young and tender, had this Liberty given unto him by the Lord, to wit, Ask what I ſhall give thee: He then begged for Wiſdome

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and Underſtanding; (*which is the* Principal thing, Prov. 4. 6, 7.) *and his Choice and* Speech did ſo pleaſe the Lord, *that he had asked an* Underſtanding Heart; *That he fulfilled the Requeſt of his Lips, and* Gave him an underſtanding Heart; ſo that there was none like him before him, neither after him ſhould any ariſe like unto him. *And not only ſo, but he alſo gave him other things, which are higher deſirable, and valuable with young Perſons. As he ſaith,* I have alſo given thee that which thou haſt not asked, both Riches and Honour, *&c.* And if thou wilt walk in my Ways,—then I will lengthen thy Days, 2 King. 3. 5, 14. *Lo here* young perſons! *You have an eminent* Inſtance *ſet before you, to aſſure you, that it is your higheſt* Intereſt

reſt to get Wiſdome, *which is the moſt excellent thing: For in ſo doing, all other good and needful things ſhall be added to you. But you may ſay, Though we ſhould exerciſe our ſelves to true Wiſdome and Piety; and firſt ſeek after* that: *Yet we cannot aſſure our ſelves, That He will ſupply us with all needful things, from God's ſo dealing with* Solomon. *To this I Anſwer, That* Solomon *himſelf, as it were Relating unto God's gracious Dealing with him, doth aſſure us, That in our exerciſing our ſelves to ſincere Piety, we ſhall alſo receive therewith, the three valuable Things promiſed unto him, by way of over-plus, ſo far as they are* Profitable for us: *when he ſaith,* By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are Riches, and Honour, and Life, Prov. 22. 4. Luk. 12. 29, 31, 32. Now therefore,

fore, *ſaith* Wiſdome, hearken unto me, O ye Children: For Bleſſed are they that keep my Ways, *both now, and to all Eternity.* Hear Inſtruction, and be Wiſe, and refuſe it not, Prov. 8. 32, 33, 35. *with* ver. 17, 18, 21. *I ſhall hold thee no longer here, but refer thee to what followeth: And Praying God to Pardon what is Amiſs; and to bleſs and ſucceed what is his, I deſire to Approve my ſelf*

A Well-Willer
of thine, and
of all Mens,

March 4th. 1682.

Charles Phelpes.

THE
Gain of Godliness.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

But Godliness is profitable unto all things, having Promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

THese words are propounded by the Apostle *Paul* as a forcible motive, to move and engage *Timothy*, to observe and obey that *Exhortation* and *Counsel*, which he had given him in the fore-going verse, namely, *Exercise thy self unto Godliness*, ver. 7. and to inforce that Exhortation, He here sets before him this very Powerful and Efficacious encouragement, *For Godliness is profitable unto all things*, &c. And though that *Exhortation*, or *Command* in ver. 7. was directly and particularly given by the Apostle to *Timothy*, his own Son in the Faith; yet it was so given unto him, and was so to be observed by him, as that he might be a *Pattern*, in the observance there-

of, to the Believers generally: For ſo much is ſignified in what he preſently ſubjoyns, to wit, in *ver.* 12. where he thus ſaith, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth; But be thou an example of the Believers in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Faith, in Spirit, in Purity.* And ſo it plainly appears, that the *Counſell* and *Exhortation* given unto *Timothy* in *ver.* 7. was given to him; that he might in the obſervance of, and obedience to it, be an *Example* to the Believers; And that all of us might, in Imitation of him, and other Godly and Holy ones, heartily apply our ſelves unto true and *unfeigned Piety* and *Religion*, which is *profitable* and *advantageous* to all, that ſincerely exerciſe themſelves thereto.

Now in the words themſelves, which we have Propounded to Conſider, and Diſcourſe of, we have, as is before obſerved, a Powerful *Motive* and *Enforcement* to perſwade us, and prevail with us, *to Exerciſe our ſelves unto Godlineſs*: And this weighty *motive* is,

1. Propounded to us more *Generally*, and *Indiſtinctly*: namely, *Godlineſs is profitable unto*, or *for*, *All things*.

2. This *motive* is more *Particularly* and *Diſtinctly*, expreſſed and laid down, and the Truth of the former part evidenced, in the following words: that is to ſay, *Having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is*

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to come. In both which it doth very manifeſtly appear, and is fully evidenced, that *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, both here and hereafter, now, in this preſent, ſhort, and frail ſtate; and in that future and endleſs ſtate, we muſt all of us hereafter enter upon.

1. I ſay, we have a *Powerful* and Cogent *Motive*, to enforce that *Counſel* & *Exhortation* in *ver.* 7. more *Generally* and *Indiſtinctly* laid down and propounded to us, to wit, *Godlineſs is profitable unto, or for, all things.* Now in ſpeaking hereto, let us enquire into, and Conſider:

1. The ſubject-matter here treated of, and commended to us; and that is, *Godlineſs.*

2. That which is affirmed of it, by way of *Commendation*, and for our encouragement to exerciſe our ſelves thereto; and that is, *It is profitable unto all things.*

1. The *Subject-matter*, here treated of, and highly commended to us; and that is *Godlineſs.* But what is this *Godlineſs*, which is ſo much commended, and ſo greatly and eternally *profitable?*

Now to that Enquiry *I* ſhall give anſwer,

1. *Negatively.*
2. *Affirmatively.*

1. We ſhall ſpeak unto the fore-mentioned Enquiry *Negatively*; or ſhew what is not

meant or intended by *Godlineſs*, which is ſo much here commended, and ſo greatly *profitable*: and ſo we may ſay,

1. *Worldly Gain*, or ſecular advantage is not *Godlineſs*; nor *Godlineſs it*. There were ſome evil perſons, and Teachers alſo, it may ſeem, in the Apoſtles time, that did ſo ſuppoſe: and ſo out of a worldly deſign, did make a profeſſion of the Faith of our Lord Jeſus, and of the Chriſtian Religion: of them St. *Paul* ſpeaks in this Epiſtle to *Timothy*, ſaying unto him of ſome men, that they were deſtitute of the Truth, *Suppoſing that gain is Godlineſs: from ſuch withdraw thy ſelf*, 1 Tim. 6. 5. their Appearing Piety, and profeſſion of Godlineſs, was a cloak of Covetouſneſs; and an Engine which they made uſe of, to Advance themſelves in the World: and when their Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion would not conduce, or contribute to their worldly deſign, they would then take their leaves of *that*, and embrace another, which they imagined would. And thus, it may juſtly be feared, it is with too too many in our dayes and times in which we live: that is the beſt Religion with them, the pure Apoſtolick worſhip, which tends to Secure them from the Croſs of Chriſt, and Afflictions of the Goſpel; and which in all likelyhood conduces to their ſecular Advantage, and Grandeur in the world.

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They are too much like the *Phariſees* in our Saviours time, who were ſo zealous for the Traditions of the Elders; and ſo ſuperſtitious in obſerving their groundleſs and unneceſſary Ceremonies, and ſuperfluous impoſitions: and under all this, their hearts went after, and they hotly purſued their covetouſneſs, *Matt.* 15. 1, 9. and ch. 23. And they derided the Wiſdom of God, when they heard this Doctrine from him, to wit, *No ſervant can ſerve two Maſters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other: ye cannot ſerve God and mammon, Luk.* 16. 13, 14, 15. Thus alſo ſome of the *Jews*, when they ſaw the mighty and ſtupendious works of our Lord Jeſus; and rightly concluded from thence, that he that effected ſuch wonderful works, could, if he pleaſed, deliver them from their enemies, how Numerous or Potent ſoever they were: and that he could make them the Head of the Nations round about them, and exalt them to Glory and Riches in this world: and upon this account, they would have come, and *taken him by force, to make him their King.* And when our Lord would by no means comply with them, but departed from them: when the People therefore ſaw that Jeſus was not there, *They took ſhipping and came to Capernaum, ſeeking for Jeſus.* How great pains did this People

take to find Christ, and what zeal did they express in following him! and yet their zeal was as faulty as fervent; for they still pursued a worldly design, under all this appearing love to him, and zeal in seeking him: as our Saviour also signifies in the Reproof, and Counsel which he gives unto them; unto whom he saith, *verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles*; (in which his Power and Pity was expressed and evidenced towards the Children of men;) *But because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the son of man will give unto you*, &c. Lo here we may see it exemplified in these *Jews, That some suppose gain to be Godliness:* Their aim and design was worldly and ambitious, while they appear to have a fervent affection to Christ, and an earnest desire to follow him: Christ was but the *way*, whereby they hoped to arrive at the end of their pursuit, to wit, worldly Victory, Tranquility, Grandeur, and Domination, *John* 6. 14, 15, 24, 26, 27. And how many are there that under pretence of Religion pursue Mammon! so did they which *caused Divisions and Offences contrary to the doctrine of Christ*: of whom the Apostle saith, *They that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus, but their own Belly: and by good words,*

and

and fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple, *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. Such alſo were they, concerning whom the Apoſtle thus writes to the *Philippians*, ſaying; *For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping; that they are the enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt; whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their Belly, whoſe glory is in their ſhame, who mind earthly things*; (to wit, onely, or mainly) *Phil.* 3. 18, 19. But however too too many do falſely and miſtakingly ſuppoſe; yet *Godlineſs* is no *worldly deſign*, or Artifice.

2. Nor is *Godlineſs*, the Bodily exerciſe here mentioned by the Apoſtle; But it is oppoſed thereto in this verſe, where he ſaith, *Bodily exerciſe profitteth little: but Godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, &c. But before we ſpeak further hereto, it may not be amiſs, but uſeful for us to conſider, that by [*Bodily exerciſe*] here, the *Apoſtle* doth not mean or intend, a diligent ſervice of God's providence in any lawfull and honeſt Calling, Trade, or Employment; nor doth the *Apoſtle* any where ſpeak meanly, or undervaluingly, concerning diligence in and about the Affairs of this life. But this is *that* which is many times commanded, and commended to us in the holy Scriptures. When *Adam* was in the ſtate of Innocency, God put him into *the Garden of Eden*

den to dreſs it, and to keep it, Gen. 2. 15. And if God thought it uſeful for the *Firſt man*, to have ſome Employment then; much rather is it both uſefull and needfull for *us* now, when we have *all ſinned*, and are *come ſhort of the glory of God*; And ſo by means of *Idleneſs*, many times perſons fall into temptation, and their ſpiritual Enemies prevail againſt them, and *lead them captive at their pleaſure*, *Ezek.* 16. 49. The *Apoſtle*, ſpeaking of young Widdows, ſaith, *They learn to be idle, wandering from houſe to houſe; and not onely Idle, but Tatlers alſo, and Buſy-bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not*: And ſo *give occaſion to the Adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully*: And they themſelves, or ſome of them turned after Satan. *Idleneſs* is their firſt evill there mentioned, and a fruitful one alſo in them; and they proceeded from evill to evill; when they did not *Bear Children*, &c. *They brought forth the Bratts of ſin and ſatan*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 13, 15. And the ſame *Apoſtle* gives this command to the Believers, *to withdraw themſelves from every Brother that walketh diſorderly, and not after the Tradition, and Example of himſelf, and of his fellow Labourers. For* ſaith he, *even when we were with you, this we commanded you; that if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat; for we hear that there are ſome which walk diſorderly among you, working not at all, but are*

Buſy-

Busy-bodies; *Now them that are such we command, and Exhort by our Lord Jesus, that with quietness they work, and eat their own Bread. But ye, Brethren, be not weary of well doing:* [Namely, of *working with your hands the thing that is good, that ye may have to give to him that needeth, Eph.* 4. 28. *Tit.* 3. 8, 14.] *And if any man obey not our word, by this Epistle, note that man,* [with a Brand of infamy] *and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed,* &c. 2 *Thes.* 3. 6, 14, 15. And in his first *Epistle* to the same Believers, he gives this command; That *ye study to be quiet, and to do your own Business, and to work with your own hands,* (As we commanded you:) *that ye may walk honestly towards them that are without; and that ye may have lack of nothing,* 1 *Thes.* 4. 11, 12. with *chap.* 2. 9, 10. And he thus writes unto *Titus*, a Minister of *Christ*: *This is a faithful saying; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be carefull to maintain good works,* (lawful Employments,) *these things are good and profitable unto men.*——*And let Ours also learn to maintain good works* (or profess honest trades) *for necessary uses,* (namely, to supply their own wants, and provide for themselves those things, which are needfull for the Body, to wit, Meat, Drink, Raiment, *&c.* And also, that they may (if they can) Administer

niſter to the neceſſities of others:) *That they be not unfruitful, Tit.* 3. 8, 14. By all which it evidently appears, *that mens diligent following their lawfull calling, and Employments*, to the end they may provide for themſelves, and be uſeful and charitable unto others, is not the *Bodily Exerciſe* here ſpoken of, and oppoſed to *Godlineſs*; but ſuch diligence in buſineſs, is called *well-doing*, and *good-works*, &c. And is that which we ought to exerciſe our ſelves unto. And it is well worthy our obſervation, That when *Paul* ſaith: *ye remember Brethren, our Labour and Travel; for Labouring night and day, becauſe we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Goſpel of God.* He then immediately adds; *Ye are witneſſes, and God alſo, how Holily, and Juſtly*, &c. *we behaved our ſelves among you that believe:* ſignifying, that their *Diligence* in their worldly vocation, was not oppoſite unto, but well conſiſtent with, if not included in, their holy and pious Behaviour amongſt the believers, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 9, 10. And it ſeems our *Lord Jeſus*, the Holy one of God, did, before he entred into his *Prophetick Office*, exerciſe himſelf in the Trade of a *Carpenter:* hence ſome *Jews* ſay concerning him, *Is not this the Carpenter?* Mark 6. 3. And it is very probable, that our Lord was brought up in the ſame trade, with his ſuppoſed

poſed Father. To which I ſhall here add no more.

But the *Bodily exerciſe* which the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks of, and which he ſpeaks ſo undervalu-ingly of, in the place we are diſcourſing from, and which he doth oppoſe to *Godlineſs*; doth mean, *abſtinence from things Lawful*, upon the command of ſome Teachers; or when they forbid us the uſe or enjoyment of Law-ful things, upon a Religious account. And that this is here meant by *Bodily Exercise*, ap-pears in the fore-going verſes of this Chap-ter; for there the *Apoſtle* ſaith; *Now the ſpi-rit ſpeaketh expreſly, that in the latter times ſome will depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils: ——forbidding to marry; and commanding to ab-ſtain from meats, which God hath Created to be received with thanksgiving, of thoſe who be-lieve and know the Truth. For every Crea-ture of God is good, and nothing to be refuſed, if it be received with thanksgiving. For it is Sanctified by the word of God, and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of theſe things, thou ſhalt be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, &c.——But refuſe profane and Old Wives Fables; And exerciſe thy ſelf unto god-lineſs; for bodily Exerciſe* (about theſe Old Wives Fables) *profiteth little*: (or, *is worth nothing*; as a like Phraſe is uſed by the *Wiſe-*

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man when he ſaith, *the heart of the wicked is little worth*; to wit, it is good for nothing, *Prov.* 10. 20.) *But godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, &c. And ſo we may ſay, *godlineſs* is not a ſtrict and Conſciencious *Obſervance* of, or *Abſtinence* from, indifferent and lawful things, at the command of ſuperſtitious Teachers and guides: or as the Apoſtle elſe-where ſpeaketh, *the Kingdom of God* (or the Chriſtian Religion) *is not meat and drink; but righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt. For he that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for Peace*, &c. *Rom.* 14. 17, 18, 19. To the ſame purpoſe alſo, Saint *Paul* writes to the believing *Coloſſians*, ſaying; *wherefore if ye be dead with Chriſt, from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye Subject to Ordinances?* [*Touch not, taſte not, handle not, which are all to periſh with the uſing:*] *after the commandments and ordinances of men; which things have indeed a ſhew of Wiſdom in Will-Worſhip, and Humility*, &c. They have a *ſhew of Piety* and Religion, and nothing of the *power* thereof in Truth and reality. And of ſuch as have their Life in *obſerving*, or *Abſtaining* from, ſuch *Indifferent* things, it may be ſaid, *They have a form of godlineſs, but deny*

deny the Power thereof, *Col.* 2. 20, 21, 23. with. 2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 5. Conſciencious *Obſervance* of, or *Abſtinence* from, theſe Lawful and *Indifferent* things, is not the *godlineſs* which is here commended to us, and repreſented to be ſo advantageous and gainful: *For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature*, *Gal.* 6. 15, 16. 1 *Cor.* 7. 19. The great ſtreſs of the *Phariſees* Religion, conſiſted in unneceſſary, or lighter matters: *they made broad their Phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments.* They were very zealous in obſerving, and appearing for, the Traditions of the Elders. *They paid Tithe of Mint, and Anniſe, and Cummin:* But in the mean time, *they omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith: and while they ſtrained at gnats, they ſwallowed Camels.* But the heart of theſe men, was far removed from inward and ſincere Piety and Purity; For though they outwardly appeared righteous unto men, yet within they were full of Hypocriſy and Iniquity. And againſt them our Lord denounced many heavy and ſevere *woes*, *Mat.* 15. 1, 9, 20. and *chap.* 23. 4, 5, 23, 28. And ſo it is too too much in our Times, with very many profeſſed Chriſtians of the reformed Religion, ſome are ſo very hot and earneſt for the *Traditions* and Impoſitions of the *Elders*,

ders, that they almoſt, or altogether, Equalize them unto, if not prefer them before, the Commandments of the Lord. And ſome others are ſo very Superſtitiouſly zealous againſt them, that they therein make little or nothing of diſobedience to Civil Magiſtrates, or Eccleſiaſtical Rulers and Governours; and think their *Injunction makes Lawful things unlawful*. But herein, both theſe ſorts do not follow, or exerciſe themſelves unto *Godlineſs*; nor walk in the ſpirit, and ſteps of the *Apoſtles* of our *Lord Jeſus*. And particularly, they walk not in the ſteps of the *Apoſtle Paul*; for none was more zealous then he, in appearing for, and Aſſerting the weighty matters of the Law of Faith, in which the Kingdom conſiſteth. Hence he ſaith concerning theſe things, *do I now perſwade men, or God? or do I ſeek to pleaſe men? for if I yet pleaſed men I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt*, *Gal.* 1. 6, 10. With reſpect to theſe momentous things, *he would not give place by Subjection* in the leaſt, *no, not for an hour, that the Truth of the Goſpel might continue* with the believers, *Gal.* 2. 4, 5. But now, as with reſpect unto indifferent matters, none was more indifferent and flexible than he. Hence he thus Expreſſeth himſelf; *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made my ſelf ſervant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto*

to the Jews *I became as a* Jew, *that I might gain the* Jews; *To them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law. To them that are without Law, as without Law, (being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Chriſt,) that I might gain them that are without Law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome. And this I do for the Goſpel's ſake,* &c. 1 *Cor.* 9. 19, 20, 23. And it is obſervable, that the *Apoſtle* did not Act Extraordinarily, in his *Indifferency* about theſe indifferent and lighter matters; but to ſet others, even us all, an example to follow him. Hence, when he again ſpeaks of theſe Lower and Lawful things, he ſaith: *Give none offence, neither to the* Jews, *nor to the* Gentiles, *nor to the Church of God: even as I pleaſe all men in all things, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be ſaved.* And then Immediately he Subjoynes to the former words this Exhortation; *Be ye followers of me, even as I alſo am of Chriſt Jeſus,* 1 *Cor.* 10. 32, 33. and *chap.* 11. 1.

O Let us not then miſtake this *Bodily exerciſe for Godlineſs*, or think that True Piety conſiſts in an obſervance of, or Abſtinence from, theſe Light and Indifferent things;

things; for neither the one, nor the other, ſimply conſidered, will avail us any thing: (though ſtill it is good and well-pleaſing to God, to ſubmit our ſelves to them that have the rule over us, in Lawful things; and to *Follow Peace*, ſo far as is conſiſtent with Holineſs and Charity, *Heb.* 13. 17. and *Chap.* 12. 14. *Rom.* 14.) we may ſay of theſe *Indifferent* things, as the *Apoſtle* doth of meats; *But meat Commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat, are we the better*; neither if we eat not, are we the worſe. *But take we heed, leſt by any means this liberty of ours, become a ſtumbling-block to them that are weak*, 1 *Cor.* 8. 8, 9. *Godlineſs* is generally *profitable*; but theſe *Indifferencies*, ſimply conſidered, profit little, or nothing. O then, conſider and receive that Counſel given to the believing *Hebrews*; to wit, *be not carried about with divers and ſtrange Doctrines: for it is a good thing, that the heart be eſtabliſhed with Grace, not with Meats, which have not profited them that have been Occupied therein*, Heb. 13. 7, 9. But no more to that particular.

3. Nor is the *Godlineſs* here mentioned and Commended, *the worſhip of God onely*, in a ſtrict and reſtrained ſenſe; or that Religious ſervice which doth directly and immediately appertain unto the only living and true God, only. Indeed, ſometimes the word *Godlineſs*

is to be taken in that narrow and limited ſenſe, when it is ſpoken of diſtinctly: As when it is diſtinguiſhed from *Honeſty:* as it is by the Apoſtle where he ſaith, *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godlineſs, and Honeſty,* 1 Tim. 2. 2.. And elſe-where it is diſtinguiſhed from other divine graces and vertues: ſo this Apoſtle thus Exhorts *Timothy, follow after Righteouſneſs, Godlineſs, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekneſs,* 1 Tim. 6. 11. And ſo he doth diſtinguiſh *Godly,* from *Righteouſly,* and *Soberly,* Tit. 2. 11. 12. And to the ſame purpoſe the Apoſtle *Peter* mentions *Godlineſs,* by way of diſtinction from other fruits of the ſpirit; where he thus Exhorts the believers, ſaying: *Adde to your faith, vertue; and to vertue, knowledge; and to knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance Patience; and to Patience, Godlineſs; and to Godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, Charity;* 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7. As *Godlineſs* is not either, or both. of the fore-mentioned particulars, to wit, *ſecular advantage,* or *bodily exerciſe,* at all: ſo neither is it onely the Divine Worſhip of God, which immediately and only relates unto him, in a narrow and diſtrict ſenſe and conſideration.

2. But *Affirmatively* we may ſay, *Godlineſs* in this place, being mentioned alone, is to be

taken in a very large, and Extenſive ſenſe: even as *Faith*, which though ſometimes it be diſtinguiſhed from other fruits of the ſpirit, and ſo is to be taken more narrowly, 1 *Cor.* 13. 2, 13. *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. Yet elſe-where it is to be underſtood more Comprehenſively, *Joh.* 3. 15, 16. And Chap. 6. 29. *Act.* 16. 31. And the ſame we might Apply to *Holineſs*, *Righteouſneſs*, *Love*, *Repentance*, &c. So I ſay here, we are to underſtand by *Godlineſs*, *the whole Duty of man*; toward God, toward his neighbour, and toward himſelf, as, Tit. 2. 11, 12. Thus when the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *know that the Lord hath ſet apart him that is Godly for himſelf*, Pſal. 4. 4. He means by the *Godly man* there, not ſtrictly ſuch an one as worſhips the true God; but the perſon that doth Univerſally, and ſincerely keep Gods Commandments. And thus the *Godly* are oppoſed to *the unrighteous*, by Saint *Peter*, when *the unrighteous* mean ſuch perſons as ſin, not againſt God directly or only, but againſt themſelves alſo, and their neighbours, or brethren; as is evidently ſignified in his words, to wit; *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptation, and to reſerve the unjuſt to the day of Judgment to be puniſhed. But chiefly them that walk after the fleſh, in the luſt of uncleanneſs, and deſpiſe government: preſumptuous are they,*

they, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities, 2 Pet. 2. 8. 10. And thus alſo, the whole Converſation that becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt is called, *a living Godly in Chriſt Jeſus*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. And that *kindneſs*, which ought to be ſhewed to Relations, or to Parents, is called *Godlineſs*, by Saint *Paul*, where he ſaith; *Let them learn to ſhew Piety at home, and to requite their Parents; for that is good and acceptable before God*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. And kindneſs and Courteſy toward brethren, is to this purpoſe expreſt alſo by Saint *John*, as it is read in our Tranſlation, where it is ſaid, *whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly ſort, thou ſhalt do well*, 3. Joh. 5. 6. And ſo, on the other hand, they are called *ungodly perſons, who turn the grace of our God into Laſciviouſneſs*, in a general conſideration, *Jud.* 4. 2 *Pet.* 2. 5, 6. And very frequently in the book of the *Pſalmes*, where in the Tranſlation after the *Hebrew* we read, *wicked*; the *Septuagint* read *ungodly*; and ſo doth our Vulgar Tranſlation: as we by obſervation may ſee. And thus as I have ſaid, *Godlineſs* is to be accepted in this place, in ſuch an Extenſive and Comprehenſive conſideration. And ſo taking it, and looking upon it, we may ſay,

1. That by *Godlineſs* here we are to underſtand,

derſtand, *the Chriſtian Faith*, or the Articles thereof, which are to be believed by us; and the *unfeigned belief* thereof; which this Apoſtle calls, *the myſtery of godlineſs*, when he ſaith; *without Controverſy*, or *Confeſſedly*, *great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs, God was manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the ſpirit, ſeen of Angels, Preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. And of which Truth, or myſtery, *the Church of the living God is the ground and Pillar*, v. 15. And ſo this myſtery of Godlineſs contains in it, the incarnation, abaſement, ſufferings, death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, and Exaltation of the Son of God, and all the Truths of the Goſpel, which are therein Preached to us, to the end they may be unfeignedly and heartily embraced, and entertained by us; and which myſtery is called the Goſpel. Thus when the Apoſtle ſaith to the *Corinthians*, *I declare unto you the Goſpel, which I Preached unto you, which alſo ye have received*, &c. He then more Particularly acquaints them with, and re-minds them of, the Goſpel, which he had formerly Proclaimed unto them, ſaying; *For I delivered unto you firſt of all, that which I alſo received; how that Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he roſe again the third day, according*

ding to the Scriptures: and that he was ſeen of Cephas, then of the Twelve, &c. 1 Cor. 15. 1, 4, 8. And ſo this Doctrine of Godlineſs is called, *The word of Faith*, which the *Apoſtles* have Preached and delivered, *Rom.* 10. 8. 10, 15, 17. And *the Faith of the Goſpel*, Phil. 1. 27. And the *Faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, of Glory, Jam. 2. 1. And the *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, Jude 3. 4. To which I ſhall not here particularly ſpeak.

2. And by *Godlineſs* here we are alſo to underſtand, *the Chriſtian life* and practice, which is Taught us by the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, as it is now Preached unto us according to the Revelation of the Myſtery. Hence the Goſpel of *Chriſt* is called, *the Doctrine according to Godlineſs*; becauſe it doth teach us to ſerve God acceptably, with Reverence and Godly fear; *to ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and Righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life*, 1 Tim. 6. 3. Heb. 12. 28. As the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *the grace of God, which bringeth Salvation unto all men, hath appeared: teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent world*, (in this poſture) *looking for the bleſſed hope*, &c. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13. And the ſame Apoſtle declaring to the believing *Epheſi-*

ans the ſad miſcarriage of the *Gentiles*, that knew not God; And how they walked in the vanity of their mindes; he then ſaith unto them: *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt: if ſo be that ye have heard him, and been taught by him as the truth is in Jeſus: that ye put off, concerning the former converſation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts. And be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind. And that ye put on the New-Man, which after God is Created in Righteouſneſs and Holineſs of Truth.* To give us to underſtand, that the word of the Truth of the Goſpel of Chriſt doth Teach us, to be pure in heart, and Pious in all manner of Demeanour and converſation; for which cauſe alſo it is called, *the Truth which is after Godlineſs*, Eph. 4. 20, 24. With Tit. 1. 1. It gives unto us more perfect, Eaſy, and excellent commands and rules, then the Law doth; however as to the cleanneſs of them. It ſets before us more excellent and forcible Motives and Arguments, on the right hand, and on the left; to Enforce our Duty. It propounds to us the moſt excellent example of Jeſus the Son of God; That we might follow his ſteps, and walk as he hath walked. And alſo with it, are afforded more abundant and powerful aſſiſtances, of the grace and ſpirit of God, to work in us both to will, and to do of good pleaſure: That we might do all things with-

without Murmuring, and diſputings; that ſo we might be blameleſs and harmleſs. And therefore, as our bleſſed *Saviour* ſaith, *except your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees*, (which were the moſt ſtrait ſect of the *Jews* Religion, Act. 26. 5.) *Ye ſhall in no Caſe enter into the Kingdome of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 19, 20, 47, 48. *To whom much is given, of them much will be required*, Luk. 12. 47, 48. And we therefore, being preferred above the *Jews*, ought to exceed them in all Godlineſs and Goodneſs, 1 Pet. 1. 10, 12, 13, 18. *What manner of perſons ought we to be in all holy converſation and Godlineſs!* Be we then diligent that we may be found of him *in Peace, without Spot and Blameleſs*, 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10, 12. 2 Pet. 3. 12. 14. And ſo in a few words, the *Godlineſs* here commended to us doth contain in it, *An hearty, unfeigned, and operative belief of the Goſpel; and a life & Practice ſuitable thereunto*, to wit, in ſincere *Holineſs, Righteouſneſs*, and *Sobriety*, Rom. 6. 17, 18, 21. And thus, according to my weakneſs, I have briefly ſhewn what is here meant by *Godlineſs*.

2. Conſider we in the next place, what is here *Affirmed of Godlineſs*, by way of its *Commendation*; And for our encouragement to exerciſe our ſelves thereto: And that is, *It is*

profitable for, or *unto*, *all things*. It is that which is of greateſt and moſt general advantage to them that exerciſe themſelves heartily unto it.

But, before we ſpeak any further thereto, we may obſerve; that the *Apoſtle* here, doth not declare unto us, the whole excellency of the Chriſtian Faith and Life; or give unto us a Compleat Commendation of it; for it is *pleaſant*, ſweet, and grateful alſo; it is as *delightful* as *Gainful*; as *pleaſurable* as *profitable*; as it is ſaid of *Wiſdome*, to wit, of Sincere Piety, *her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace*, Prov. 3. 13, 17. *Great peace have they that Love thy Law: And nothing ſhall offend them*, Pſal. 119. 165. *Believing in Chriſt* (with Faith unfeigned) they rejoyce with *joy unſpeakable*, and *full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1, 6, 8. And ſuch as uprightly exerciſe themſelves to the Faith, and fear of the Lord, may ſay with the *Apoſtle*, *our rejoycing, our glorying, is this, the Teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our Converſation in the World*, &c. 2 Cor. 1. 12. And this is that Efficacious Motive and Argument, which our *Lord Jeſus* ſets before us, to perſwade and prevail with us, *to take his yoke upon us*, and ſeriouſly undertake his ſervice; namely, ſaith he, *my yoke is eaſy, ſweet, gracious; and my burden is light*, Mat. 11. 29, 30. As

As alſo, the applying our hearts and lives to the *power of Godlineſs*, is the moſt *advancing*, noble, and honourable exerciſe we can ingage our ſelves in: *To you that believe, he is an honour*, 1 Pet. 2, 6, 7. And when the *Wiſe-man* Commends *Wiſdome*, and Exhorts and excites us to the diligent purſuit of it, ſaying, *Wiſdom is the principal thing, get Wiſdom, and with all thy gettings get underſtanding*: he then propounds this motive and inforcement, *exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee; ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour, when thou doſt embrace her. She ſhall give to thine head an Ornament of Grace, a Crown of glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee. Hear, O my Son, and receive my ſayings*, &c. Prov. 4. 7, 8, 10. *The reward of humility, and of the fear of the Lord, is honour*; even that alſo which is excellent and durable, *Prov.* 22. 4. 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. And if the deſire of honour and glory, have any Influence upon us, let us exerciſe our ſelves unto that Religion which is *pure*, and *undefiled before God and the Father*. We may Lawfully, and Laudably, be Ambitious of that Honour, which is united with, and Entaild upon, divine vertue and goodneſs: and in following after *godlineſs*, we ſhall thereby attain unto true and abiding honour. For God will give *glory, Honour, and Peace, unto every man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 7, 10. Iſa. 43. 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. Rom. 2. 28, 29.

But

But though *Godlineſs* be, as we have briefly ſhewed, both *Pleaſurable*, and *Honourable*; yet in this place the *Apoſtle* aſſerts, the general *Profitableneſs* of it, to induce us to the hearty exerciſe of it. And gain and advantage is that which is Generally deſirable, and greatly Valuable; and which excites and encourages men, to take much paines, to run many hazards, to endure much hardſhip, and encounter with many difficulties and dangers. What makes ſo many perſons take ſuch long and tedious Journeys, and Voyages; ride through thick and thin; expoſe themſelves to the cold, and other inconveniences, but the hope and expectation of Profit? *In all labour there is profit*, eyed, deſigned, and purſued, *Prov.* 14. 23. And if men riſe up early, and ſit down late, and eat the bread of careſulneſs, for ſecular gain and advantage; much rather ſhould we ſo mind, the great and excellent gain of true Piety, as to Apply our ſelves thereto, with all our might and main; and endure any hardſhips in that application, that we may be made partakers thereof; as the *Apoſtle* and his fellow-Labourers did; as he ſignifies to us, in the next verſe but one to this, we are diſcourſing of, ſaying; *Therefore* (becauſe *Godlineſs* is ſo generally and greatly *gainful*) *we both labour, and ſuffer reproach*, 1 Tim. 4. 8, 10. And in

our

our *working*, and continued *abounding* in the work of the Lord, our *labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. But to this I ſhall enlarge no further at preſent; becauſe there will be apt occaſion, to ſpeak more particularly hereto, in the following part of the words; in which the *Apoſtle* doth more diſtinctly evidence the Truth, of what he more indiſtinctly propounds, in the former part, ſaying, *having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

But now from this Motive, as thus generally propounded, to move and provoke us to exerciſe our ſelves to true *Piety*; we may inſer ſeveral things, which may be uſeful for us: As,

1. Seeing this is propounded by the *Apoſtle*, to perſwade us to follow *Godlineſs*, *That it is Profitable unto all things*; then we may from hence learn, that it is no mercenary or baſe thing; but what is well pleaſing unto God; That we ſhould ſo mind and conſider the *gain and Profit of Godlineſs*, that we may exerciſe our ſelves to the *Myſtery* and *Practice of it*. Indeed, when we follow Religion, for the advantage, promotion and Grandeur of this World, only, or Principally; then we may truly be ſaid to be *mercenary*, and ſhall no longer appear to be Religious, then as *that* may conduce unto *our* ſecular intereſt, and Ambitious

Ambitious deſigns, as before we have ſaid, and as the devil falſly and maliciouſly ſuggeſted concerning *Job*, Chap. 1. 9, 11. But we may ſo conſider the Real and Eternal *gain* of true Piety, as to quicken, Excite, and perpetuate our endeavours and Purſuit after pure Religion, and yet not at all be *mercenary*, in an unworthy ſenſe, or Reprovable conſideration. And, that we may Lawfully and allowably, have an eye and reſpect, to the advantage and gain of true Piety, to engage us to exerciſe our ſelves, to the ſerious and conſtant Practice of it doth appear.

1. Becauſe God's people, when they have neglected their Duty, have been juſtly reproved for not believing, that *Religion*, was their greateſt and trueſt Intereſt; or for not purſuing advantageous things: *Elihu* ſomewhat ſeverely reproves *Job*, ſaying, *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* ——*For thou haſt ſaid, what advantage will it be unto thee, and what profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* whereas, as he afterwards adds, Though we give nothing to God if we be righteous; yet our *Righteouſneſs will profit the Son of man*, *Job.* 36. 2, 3, 7, 8. And the Lord himſelf doth fault and reprove the Prieſt's, and Paſtors, becauſe they *walked after things that did not profit them.* And he thus expoſtulates with his people: *Hath a Nation changed their Gods,*

which

which yet are no God's? *But my people have changed their glory,* (their God,) *for that which doth not profit? Be aſtoniſhed, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid,* &c. *Jer.* 2. 8, 11, 12, 13.

2. That to excite us to purſue undefiled Religion, we may have an eye at its reward, is further evident, and evidenced; in that God, in his promiſes, doth ſet the gain of it before us, to make us truly Pious: and if this be to be *mercenary*, to have a reſpect to the recompence of the reward, God makes men ſo, by his aſſurances and encouragements. Thus he ſaith unto *Abram*, the Father of the faithful: fear not,—— *I am thine exceeding great reward, Gen.* 15. 1. *My Son*, ſaith the holy Spirit, *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long: for ſurely there is a reward, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off. Hear thou, my Son, and be wiſe; and guide thine heart in the way, Prov.* 23. 17. 18. *Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons, and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore theſe promiſes, Dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of* God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14, 18. with *chap.* 7. 1. *Rev.* 22. 12, 14.

3. The truth of the former doth further appear,

appear, and is manifeſted herein; in that the moſt eminently holy ones, who ſurely were not *mercenary*, did undertake and purſue their pious work, with a reſpect unto the gracious reward of it; as to mention in a very few particulars. It is ſaid of *Moſes*, that eminent ſervant of the Lord, that by faith *when he was come to years, he refuſed to be called the ſon of* Pharaoh's *daughter; chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the People of* God, *than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon. Eſteeming the reproach of Chriſt, greater riches then the treaſures in* Egypt. But what made him thus *comparatively* deſpiſe, and ſet light by the excellencies of this world, the Honour, Pleaſures, and Treaſures thereof; and undergo the difficulties and grievous things thereof? The Apoſtle doth preſently acquaint us with the true reaſon thereof, ſaying, *For he had reſpect unto the recompence of the reward*, which reward was not the Land of *Canaan*; for he never entred thereinto: But (principally however) that *Inheritance incorruptible*, and undefiled, and which *fadeth not away*, *Heb.* 11. 24, 26. The *Apoſtle Paul* alſo was very eminent & exemplary for Holineſs, and diligence in the work of the Lord; and did outrun his Brethren therein; and yet, that which made him ſo *fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*; was the *Prize* which was ſet before him:

now,

now, ſaith he, *They do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we*, (Run the ſpiritual Race to obtain) *an incorruptible. I therefore ſo run, not as uncertainly:——I keep under my body, and bring it into ſubjection; leaſt that by any means, when I have preached to others, I my ſelf ſhould be a Caſt-away*; Namely, leſt he ſhould loſe, or fall ſhort of the reward of the *Incorruptible Crown*, 1 *Cor.* 9, 18, 25, 27. And again he ſaith; *Brethren, I count not my ſelf to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth to thoſe things which are before; I preſs toward the Mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* And this his exerciſe was ſo laudable, and imitable, that he exhorts the believers preſently after, to follow his example herein, ſaying unto them; *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk ſo, as ye have us for an enſample, Phil,* 3. 13, 14, 17.

Yea, a greater than he, and one that was above All, to wit, our Lord Jeſus, the Captain of our Salvation, comforted and encouraged himſelf, in the conſideration of the recompence he ſhould receive; and therefore Patiently and Perſeveringly endured Temptation, and continued in well-doing,; and ſurely, He was not *Mercenary*; or if He was,

was, we may well be ſo alſo. The *Prophet* ſpeaking in his Perſon, ſaith, *I have laboured in vain, and ſpent my ſtrength for nought, and in vain; yet ſurely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work, or reward, with my God.*——*I ſhall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord; and my God ſhall be my ſtrength,* Iſa. 49. 4, 5. And the *Apoſtle* thus Exhorteth, and ſpeaketh unto the believers, ſaying, *looking unto Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of the Faith, who for the joy ſet before him endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame,* &c. Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3. Joh. 17. 4, 5.

4. That we may Lawfully have reſpect unto the *gain of godlineſs*, in exerciſing our ſelves unto the ſincere practice thereof, may further appear, by thoſe *Metaphorical* or borrowed expreſſions, made uſe of in the Holy Scriptures; in which our Practice of Piety is deſcribed, and declared to us. So it is many times called *Labour*, and *work*, to wit, that of a *ſervant*: now, doth not the recompence he ſhall receive encourage a ſervant to labour? and may not he Lawfully expect it, and long for it? *Mat.* 20. 1. 14. And, *to them who by patient continuance in well doing ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and immortality*, he will render *eternal life*, Rom. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 15, 58. Rev. 14. 13. Sometimes it is called *running, as in a race:* and who ſo runs, but in

in hope to receive the Prize? and the *Apoſtle* thus Counſels, or Commands, the believers, *ſo run, that ye may obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. Sometimes it is called and compared to *Plowing*, *Sowing*, &c. And who will employ themſelves therein, but in hope and expectation of an *Harveſt?* as the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *that he that ploweth ſhould plow in Hope*; *and he that Threſheth in hope, ſhould be partaker of his Hope*, 1 Cor. 9. 10. *Jam.* 5. 7. And, *whatſoever a man ſoweth, that alſo ſhall he reap.—He that ſoweth to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting*, Gal. 6. 7. 8. And they that *ſow to themſelves in righteouſneſs*, may Lawfully expect to *reap in mercy*, Hoſ. 10. 12. Sometimes it is compared to a *Warfare*; and *who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges?* 1 Cor. 9. 7. And a *Crown* is propoſed to the ſeven Churches in *Aſia*, to Animate them, that they may *overcome*; and it is aſſured to every one that doth over-come, *Rev.* 2. and chap. 3. And the *Apoſtle* thus Exhorts *Timothy*; *fight the good fight of Faith, lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. 14.

5. They that ſay, a man may not from the expectation of a reward exerciſe himſelf to righteouſneſs, and all goodneſs, or if he doth, he is *mercenary* therein; do make *void Faith*, in ſome acts of it, and *Hope* wholly; for *Hope* is a well-grounded deſire and ex-

pectation, of ſome abſent, or future good: *Hope that is ſeen is not hope, for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for?* Rom. 8. 23, 25. And *Hope* is very efficacious and operative, to engage us to perform our duty; *Lord*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt, I have hoped for thy Salvation, and done thy commandments*, Pſal. 119. 166. *Every man that hath this hope in Chriſt*, [that when he ſhall appear, he ſhall be like him] *purifieth himſelf even as he is pure*; 1. Joh. 3. 2, 3. This is alſo an *Anchor* of the ſoul, to preſerve it from ſhip-wrack, in the midſt of the proud waves, billows, and ſtorms of the *Sea* of this troubleſome and Tempeſtuous world, Heb. 6. 18, 19. And *Faith is the ground of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen*: For if men do not believe that there is a reward for the righteous; and that God is faithful to give it to them, and beſtow it upon them, in due ſeaſon; why then ſhould they hope, or expect any? *Rom.* 5. 1, 2. and ch. 15. 13.

6. Yea, that we not only may, but *ought* to minde the recompence of the reward, that we may ſincerely and ſtedfaſtly exerciſe our ſelves unto what is good, and well-pleaſing unto God; doth plainly appear from what the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks to the believing *Hebrews*, ſaying; *but without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God: for he that cometh to God muſt believe that he*

he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, Heb. 11. 5. 6. As alſo the Truth hereof doth further appear, in thoſe Commands which the *Apoſtles* have given by the Lord Jeſus, to the believers: As, *ſo run, that ye may obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. *Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men*, &c. Gal. 6. 9. 10. And when the *Apoſtle* had been ſaying, as before we took notice, *I preſs toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*; He then immediately adds thereto, *let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded*, &c. To wit, as he himſelf was, Phil. 3. 14. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 12.

7. And laſtly, as to this; a *reward* is particularly propounded to us, and needful to be reſpected, and expected by us, to make us willing to perform thoſe Tasks of *Chriſt*, which appear to be very difficult, chargeable, and unpleaſant to us: as to ſay, that we may patiently and chearfully *take up the Croſs of Chriſt*, and endure affliction as good Souldiers of his, for the Word, and way of truth; it is doubtleſs very requiſite and needful to have ſuch reſpect unto the Crown of Glory, as that none of the things we ſuffer may move us: and therefore that is propoſed to us, to ſtrengthen us to ſuffer adverſity and perſecu-

tion. *Bleſſed are ye*, ſaith our Saviour, *when men ſhall hate you; and when they ſhall ſeparate you from their company; and ſhall reproach you; and caſt out your name as evil, for the Son of man's ſake; rejoyce ye in that day, and leap for Joy; for behold*, (mind and conſider this ſeriouſly & attentively,) *your reward is great in heaven*, Luk. 6. 22, 23 Mat. 5. 10, 12. *For which things ſake we faint not*, ſaith the *Apoſtle:—for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen:* ——*for the things which are not ſeen are eternal*, 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. and chap. 5. 1. 9. And the Apoſtle *Peter* thus admoniſhes and encourages the believers, to partake of the afflictions of the *Goſpel*; *think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery Tryal, as if ſome ſtrange thing happened unto you; but rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts Sufferings; that when his glory ſhall be revealed, ye alſo may be glad with exceeding joy*, 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13. It is a *faithful ſaying; for if we be dead with him, we ſhall alſo live with him. If we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him.*——*Of theſe things put them* (namely, the believers) *in Remembrance*: intimating; that the *believing remembrance* hereof is very proper, and profitable for them, to ſtrengthen them to all patience and long-ſuffering

fering with joyfulneſs, in all their Tribulations, 2 *Tim.* 2. 11, 14. 2 Cor. 1. 7.

Again, that we may chearfully and liberally, according to our ſeveral abilities, *give to the poor*; and exerciſe our ſelves in works of *mercy* and *charity*, in adminiſtring to the neceſſities of ſuch, as are needy and indigent; it is needful and requiſite for us to conſider the *reward* ſet before us to excite us thereto; otherwiſe we ſhall be back-ward to undertake, or continue in, this good work. And therefore oftentimes, the future advantage of this pious work is propoſed, that we might be forward thereto. Thus our Lord ſaith to the *young-man* whom he loved; *if thou wilt be perfect, go and ſell that thou haſt, and give to the poor; and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven*, Mat. 19. 21. And to the ſame purpoſe our *Saviour* ſpeaks unto his *Diſciples* alſo, ſaying; *ſell that ye have, and give Almes, provide your ſelves bags which wax not old, a Treaſure in the heavens that faileth not, where no Thief approacheth, nor Moth corrupteth*, Luk. 12. 33, 34. And to the end the Apoſtle *Paul* might provoke the *Corinthians* to a liberal *diſtribution* toward their poor and *neceſſitous brethren*, he thus writes unto them, *he that ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly: and he that ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully*, 2 Cor. 9. 6, 9. with, Pſal. 112. 9.

Eccleſ. 12. 1. And he thus Commands *Timothy, charge them that are rich in this world, ——that they do good; that they be rich in good workes; ready to diſtribute; willing to communicate:* (and that they might ſo be he ſignifies, that this would turn to their own future account and advantage, in the day of Chriſt, ſaying;) *laying up in Store for themſelves, a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life,* 1 Tim. 6. 17, 19. Once more; to the end we may really *love our enemies,* and ſuch as hate and perſecute us; and may do good to them, and be Cordially kind to them, according to their *needs,* and our *Capacity*; it is very behoveful and requiſite for us to mind, and have reſpect unto the encouragement of a *future reward,* aſſured to them that exerciſe themſelves in that work of Perfection. To this purpoſe, when our Lord gives this command to his diſciples, namely, *I ſay unto you which hear, love your enemies; do good to them which hate you, bleſs them that curſe you; and pray for them that deſpightfully uſe you, and Perſecute you:* he afterwards in the ſame diſcourſe aſſures them, that their obſerving and obeying this command, would be for their own profit and advantage; for he thus ſaith, *Love ye your enemies; and do good, and lend; hoping for nothing again; and your reward ſhall*

be

be great: (he not only propounds and promiſes to them a *reward*, but alſo a *great one*; that they might perform this difficult and excellent duty; and then preſently after addes:) *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father alſo is merciful*, Luk. 6. 27, 28, 35, 36. Mat. 5. 44, 47, 48. It may be ſaid of this duty of heartily *loving our Enemies*, as ſometimes ſome ſaid in another Caſe, *this is an hard ſaying, who can hear it?* but that we may hear and obey it, our bountiful Lord doth *hire* us to the performance thereof, and ſo makes it eaſy. *Wherefore*, as the *wiſe man* ſaith, *if thine Enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirſty, give him Water to drink; for thou ſhalt heap coales of fire on his head: and the Lord ſhall reward thee*, Prov. 25. 22, 23.

And thus we have largely ſhewed, that it is no *mercenary*, or reprovable thing, to exerciſe our ſelves to *godlineſs*, out of a reſpect to, and hope of a *reward of grace* upon our ſo doing: but that which is *Lawful*, *Laudable*, yea and in ſome ſenſe and Caſes *requiſite* and *needful* ſo to do: and I ſhall adde no more to this firſt *uſe*; but ſhall now proceed on unto a ſecond; namely.

2. Seeing God hath made *that* which is our *Duty*, to be our great, and only real Intereſt: ſeeing he hath made *Godlineſs* our true and

moſt excellent *Gain* and *Advantage*; we may infer and learn from hence, that it is his good Will and gracious Mind in *Chriſt* concerning us, that we ſhould all of us ſeriouſly and in good earneſt, exerciſe our ſelves unto *true Piety*; That we ſhould not onely, or chiefly have a form of *Godlineſs* upon us; but that we ſhould entertain and obey the *Power* thereof: and be all of us in ſincerity, *Godly Perſons*; Therefore hath he entail'd all *profitable Proſperity* on *Godlineſs*; that we might never think of enjoying the former, without our embracing the latter. *No good thing will He withold from them that walk uprightly*, Pſal. 84. 11. Hence he thus expreſſeth himſelf, and evidenceth it to be his Cordial deſire, that we ſhould apply our ſelves to the hearty Obedience of him; *O that there were ſuch an heart in them*, that they would fear me, *and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever.* Deut. 5. 28, 29. *And now Iſrael*, ſaith *Moſes*, *what doth the Lord thy* God *require of thee, but to fear the* Lord *thy* God, *with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul: to keep the Commandments of the Lord, and his* Statutes, *which I command thee this day, for thy good?* chap. 10. 12, 13. It adds nothing really unto him, if we be holy and good; nor doth it take any thing from

from him, if we be ungodly and prophane. *If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplyed, what doeſt thou unto him? If thou be Righteous, what giveſt thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?* Job 36. 6. 8. No, but he *hires* us to the Embracement and Practice of ſincere Piety and Purity, with the undoubted *Advantage* of it to our *ſelves*. And therefore we may rationally and certainly conclude, that God our Saviour *will have all men to be ſaved, and to come unto the knowledg of the Truth*, as, 1 Tim. 2. 4. That he is not willing that any man ſhould periſh, while it is called *to day*, but that all ſhould *come to Repentance*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. Therefore he ſets before us *Life and Good, and Death and Evill, Bleſſing and Curſing*: not as if he was indifferent which of them we chuſe: but he doth Councel us, and Cordially deſire, we ſhould chuſe *Life*; and to that end, that we love the Lord our God, and obey his voice, and cleave unto him; for *He is our Life*, and the *length of our dayes*, *Deut.* 30. 10, 15, 19, 20. And doubtleſs, ſeeing it is his hearty will, we ſhould ſeriouſly exerciſe our ſelves unto the obedience of Faith, he will not be wanting to enable us thereto, by the aſiſtance of his grace; if we be not wanting to our ſelves: for he *giveth to all*

men liberally, and upbraideth not, Jam. 1. 5. *It is God that worketh in you*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *both to will, and to do, of his good Pleaſure, Phil.* 2. 12, 15. If therefore we continue diſobedient and ungodly, and ſo periſh in concluſion; we ſhall have no juſt cauſe, to blame the God of all Grace, who hath done ſo great things for us, and ſet ſo great encouragements before us, to move and engage us to ſerve him acceptably; But our Deſtruction will appear to be wholly of our ſelves; and that we our ſelves have, by obſerving lying vanities, forſaken our own mercies; and have been too too like prophane *Eſau*, who for one morſel of meat ſold his Birth-right, *Heb.* 12. 14, 17.

3. Seeing Godlineſs *is profitable unto all things*; and that our exerciſing our ſelves thereto, is our moſt certain, excellent, and eternal advantage; This then diſcovers and evidences unto us, the great and pernicious miſtake and folly of them, that think and ſpeak otherwiſe; and ſo exerciſe not themſelves thereto; but walk in Ungodly, Unrighteous, and Intemperate ways and practiſes; as if Impiety were the onely, and mainly gainfull thing, they could exerciſe themſelves unto. To this purpoſe *Job* ſpeaks of ſome wicked ones, who did greatly Flouriſh in this world, in their unrighteous courſes; and who thought

thought, that becauſe they did ſo, therefore it would be a vain and unprofitable thing, to ſerve and fear the Lord. *They ſpend their days*, ſaith he, *in Wealth, or Mirth; and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they ſay unto* God, *depart from us: for we deſire not the knowledg of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? And what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him?* Job 21. 14. 15. And to the ſame purpoſe *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of them: namely, *They ſay unto* God, *depart from us*; *And what can the Almighty do for them?* (ſee how brutiſh they are in their thoughts, or expreſſions of God; while they give him the Title of the *Almighty*, they yet ſay, *What can he do for them?* whereas they might rather, and moſt truly ſay, *What cannot the Almighty do for them?* moſt ſtrange! That he ſhould be *Almighty*, and yet ſhould have no Hands, no power to provide for his ſervants! Thus ſome wicked ones did Reaſon with ſuch contradictious Talke: But though they doubted of, or denyed, his Providence and Bounty, they did partake thereof, while they ſpake ſo Atheiſtically; for it preſently follows;) *yet he filled their houſes with good things*, Job 22, 15.—17. 18. Yea ſuch fooliſh and brutiſh ones there were, not onely amongſt them that were without the Church, but of them

them alſo that were of the Church; and of the moſt Reformed part thereof, of *Judah* God's pleaſant Plant. Hence it is ſaid concerning ſome therein; *your words have been ſtout againſt me*, ſaith the Lord: *Yet ye ſay, what have we ſpoken againſt thee? ye have ſaid, it is vain to ſerve* God; *And what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance? And that we have walked Mournfully before the Lord of hoſts?* But whence proceded this unreaſonable and abſurd talk of theirs? Surely from hence; Becauſe wicked ones did grow Great, and were Fat and Flouriſhing; therefore they thought, that their Impiety was their great Intereſt and Advantage: for ſo much is ſignified in the following words of theſe ſimple and unwiſe Perſons; to wit, *And now we call the Proud happy; yea they that work wickedneſs are ſet up; yea they that tempt God are even delivered, Mal.* 3. 13, 14, 15. Nay, that *Good Man was envious at the fooliſh*, when he *ſaw the proſperity of the wicked.* That there *were no Bands in their death, but their ſtrength was firm. That they were not in trouble as other men, neither were they plagued like other men.*——*That their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs; and they have more than heart could wiſh. Behold, ſaith he, theſe are the ungodly, they proſper in the World, they increaſe in Riches:* And while he looked upon their ſecurity,

curity, and proſperity, according to outward appearance, he was to ready and forward to ſay, *verily, I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chaſtened every Morning.* But thus this *Holy-man* ſpake in a Temptation; And preſently after, greatly blames himſelf for his weakneſs and fooliſhneſs, ſaying; *Thus mine heart was grieved; and I was pricked in my reins; So fooliſh was I, and ignorant, I was as a Beaſt before thee, Pſal.* 73. 3, 7, 12, 14, 22. But wicked Perſons are uſually ſo fooliſh & without underſtanding; And becauſe God, out of his general Bounty and Goodneſs, provides for, and proſpers them, therefore perverting what is right, they conclude, that ungodlineſs is moſt profitable for them. O, ſay ſome, if we had not been good *fellows*; if we had not kept company with vain perſons; and eaten and drunken, yea and been drunken with the drunken; we ſhould never have had their cuſtome, nor ſuch good trading as we have: or if we had not lyed, defrauded, and overreacht others; we ſhould not have kept our Shops open to this day: or if we had not oppreſſed, or out-witted others, we had been as poor as the pooreſt: whereas now, we have plentiful Eſtates, and a full Table. Like them in former times, who ſaid, *I will*

go

go after my Lovers, that gave me my Bread, and my Water, my Wool, and my Flax, mine Oyle, and my Drink, Hoſ. 2. 5. Or like them of whom it is ſaid? *They take up all of them with the Angle: they catch them in their Net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoyce, and are glad. Therefore they ſacrifice unto their Net, and burn incenſe unto their Drag, becauſe by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous, Hab.* 1. 15, 17. *Zech.* 11. 5. *Deut.* 8. 17, 18. *Jer.* 5. 26, 27, 28. But alas! This their way is their folly; and ſo it appears to be many times in this day; *for how oft is the candle* (the ſhining proſperity) *of the wicked put out? And how oft cometh their deſtruction upon them? God diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger, Job.* 21. 5, 17. *I have ſeen,* ſaith the *Pſalmiſt, the wicked in great Power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green bay-tree; yet he paſſed away, and Lo, he was not: yea I ſought him, but he could not be found, Pſal.* 37. 35, 36. *Prov.* 1. 10, 11, 13,---19. and *chap.* 23. 20, 21. Thus when ſome of the Church of God ſaid unto the Prophet, *We will certainly do, whatſoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incenſe unto the Queen of Heaven,——As we have done:——For then had we plenty of victuals, and ſaw no want.* Then the *Prophet* anſwered them, ſaying, *The Incenſe that ye burn*

in

in the Cities of Judah, and in the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, ye, and your Fathers;——did not the Lord remember them, and came it not into his mind? So that the Lord could no longer bear, becauſe of the Evil of your doings, and becauſe of the abominations, which ye have committed: therefore is your Land a Deſolation, and an Aſtoniſhment, and a Curſe, as at this day; becauſe ye burned Incenſe; and becauſe ye ſin'd againſt the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, nor walked in his Law:——Therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. In which words, we may plainly perceive the folly and evident miſtake of thoſe wicked Perſons, in that what they thought was the cauſe of their fulneſs, and proſperity, was indeed the true Reaſon and procurement of their want, and of their miſerable Ruine and diſmal adverſity, *Jer.* 44. 16, 17, 19, 24. *Hoſ.* 2. 5, 6, 8, 10. *Pſal.* 52. 3, 7. *and* 56. 7.

Or if ſuch ungodly ones, ſhould ſpend all the days of their vain Life, in wealth and proſperity, and have here no conſiderable changes; yet hereafter, in the world to come, their folly will be made manifeſt unto all men; and will then ſadly be bewailed, and acknowledged by themſelves. What will it then *profit a man, to have gain'd the whole World, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man give*

give in exchange for his ſoul? for the Son of man will come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels; and then he will reward every man according to his works, Matt. 16. 26, 27. *Eccleſ.* 12. 13, 14. *Then ſhall the ungodly change their minds, and ſigh for grief of ſpirit, and ſay within themſelves; This is he* (the Pious man) *whom we ſometimes had in deriſion, and in a parable of reproach. We fools thought his life Madneſs, and his end without Honour.——We have wearied our ſelves in the the way of wickedneſs and deſtruction; and we have gone through dangerous wayes: But we have not known the way of the Lord. What hath Pride profited us? or what profit hath the pomp of Riches brought us?—— For the hope of the ungodly is like the duſt that is blown away with the wind; and like a thin foam, that is ſcattered abroad with the ſtorm; and as the ſmoak that is diſperſed with the wind; and as the Remembrance of him paſſeth, that tarrieth but for a day,* Wiſdom 5. Then will all unrighteous perſons bemoan themſelves, and bewail their former folly and madneſs, in embracing as moſt pleaſant, and profitable, that which will then by woful experience, appear to them to be moſt bitter, loathſome, and eternally pernitious, and diſmally deſtructive to them. *What is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh*

away

away his ſoul? Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? no, no, it will then be too late. Then they ſhall *call upon me*, ſaith the Lord, but *I will not anſwer*; they *ſhall ſeek me early*, but they ſhall *not find me: Becauſe they hated Knowledge:* and *would not chuſe the fear of the Lord, Job.* 27. 8, 9. with *Prov.* 1. 24, 32. O now conſider this, ye that *forget God, leaſt he tear you in pieces, and there be no deliverer! Though a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged: yet ſurely it ſhall not be well with the wicked: neither ſhall he prolong his dayes, which are as a ſhadow, becauſe he feareth not before God, Eccleſ.* 8 12. 13.

4. In that true *Piety* and *Goodneſs is profitable unto all things*, we may then well infer from hence; that the ſincerely *Pious* and honeſt perſon, is the truly *Wiſe man*, and doth moſt really, and onely Conſult his ſure and moſt excellent Advantage; and purſue that which doth indeed, and to all eternity, tend to his beſt Happineſs and Intereſt. *He that is wiſe is profitable unto himſelf, Job.* 22. 2. *Unto man God ſaith, Behold* (mark and conſider this well,) *the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* That is to ſay, *Sincere Piety is true wiſdom, Job.* 28. 28. And they that do exerciſe themſelves thereto (however they are reputed

amongſt ſinners) are indeed *Wiſe men*, in the account of him that Judgeth righteouſly; and whoſe judgment ſhall ſtand: yea and they will appear ſo to be, in the eyes of all men, and Angels, in due ſeaſon; for in being thus wiſe, they ſhall be wiſe for themſelves; and ſhall lay up for *themſelves in ſtore, a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life, Prov.* 9. 10, 12, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6, 19. *Dan.* 12. 2, 3. Others may appear, to have more ſpeculative and notionall knowledge and wiſdom, but theſe are the onely perſons that are really and practically wiſe; and wiſer than all other men, in that they purſue *Godlineſs*; and thereby obtain and make ſure, the favour of him that loveth Piety and righteouſneſs. *Happy is the man that findeth wiſdom, and the man that getteth underſtanding; for the Merchandiſe of it, is better than the Merchandiſe of Silver; and the gain thereof than fine Gold: ſhe is more precious than Rubies; and all the things thou canſt deſire are not to be compared unto her: Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour——She is a tree of life to all that lay hold on her; and happy is every one that retaineth her, Prov.* 3. 13, 18. *I love them,* ſaith the *Wiſdom* of God, *that love me; and they that ſeek me early ſhall find me.* But what

ſhall

ſhall they be the better for finding her? what advantage will that be of unto them? much every way: for ſaith *ſhe* in the next words, *Riches and Honour are with me, yea durable Riches and Righteouſneſs* (and theſe two always go together, namely, durable Riches and Righteouſneſs:) *I walk, and lead in the way of Righteouſneſs: in the midſt of the paths of Judgment; that I may cauſe them that love me to inherit ſubſtance, and I will fill their Treaſure*, *Prov.* 8. 17, 18, 21. If therefore we would behave our ſelves wiſely; and hopefully, and ſucceſsfully purſue, that which will be really, and in truth, profitable and advantageous to us; Let us follow after righteouſneſs and Godlineſs; for this is our wiſdom and our underſtanding, as, *Deut.* 4. 5, 6. The ungodly Perſon is the greateſt fool; and ſo he is frequently called by the *Wiſdom* of God, in the Book of the *Proverbs*: And he doth appear ſo to be by his deſpiſing the fear of the Lord; in doing which he wrongs his own ſoul, and loves death, *Prov.* 1, 7. and *chap.* 8, 36. But the ſincerely pious Perſon is, and is uſually called, the *Wiſe man*; becauſe he feareth before God: and *the reward of Humility, and of the Fear of the Lord, is Riches and life*, *Prov.* 22. 4. When our *ſaviour* commends unto his diſciples, in his parable, the unjuſt Steward; not for

his unrighteouſneſs, *but becauſe he had done Wiſely*; he then gives this inſtruction unto them; *and I ſay unto you, make to your ſelves friends of the Mamon of unrighteouſneſs*: (that is, be rich and abundant in good and pious works;) *That when ye fail*, (as fail from hence we muſt all,) *They may receive you into everlaſting Habitations*, or Tabernacles: and in ſo doing, we ſhall deal wiſely and prudently for our own ſouls, Luk. 16. 8, 9. And this leads us to the laſt uſe, namely.

5. Seeing *Piety is profitable unto all things*; Be we all exhorted, perſwaded, and prevailed withal, ſeriouſly and conſtantly to exerciſe our ſelves thereto, if we would indeed aim at, and purſue that which is gainful and beneficial to us. Now in this day, in exerciſing our ſelves thereto, God will ſupply all our wants; and give unto us thoſe things, that are uſefull and needfull for us. *O taſte and ſee that the Lord is gracious: Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his Saints; for there is no want to them that fear him*, Pſal. 34. 8, 9. In thus doing, God will be our exceeding great reward, *Gen.* 15. 1. *God is not unrighteous ſaith the* Apoſtle, *to forget your work, and labour of love*, *Heb* 6. 9. *Who is there even among you, that would ſhut the doors for nought*

nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought, Mal. 1. 10. *Whoſoever ſhall give to drink, unto one of theſe little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Diſciple*, ſaith our Lord Jeſus, *verily, I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward*, Mat. 10. 42. O let us then intend his ſervice, and caſt all our cares and concernes upon him; for he careth for us: let all our Wants lye upon him, whoſe is the earth, and the fulneſs thereof; the Cattel upon a thouſand hills: and who hath given this command and encouragement to us, to wit, *truſt in the Lord, and do good, and thou ſhalt dwell in the land; and verily thou ſhalt be fed*, Pſal. 37. 3, 6.

And then hereafter, they that now live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall have the Fulneſs, and Harveſt of all ſpiritual bleſſings: *O how great is thy goodneſs which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, which thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee before the Sons of men!* Pſal. 31. 19. *For ſince the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the Ear, neither hath the Eye ſeen, O God, beſides thee, what he hath prepared for him, that waiteth for thee*, Iſa. 64. 4. He that ſate upon the Throne ſaid, behold, *I make all things new*: and he ſaid unto me, write, *for theſe words are true and faithful*:

——*he that overcometh* (to wit, his ſpiritual enemies) *ſhall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son*, Rev. 21. 5, 7. O then! Let us abſtain from, and flee all Ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts; and follow after Righteouſneſs, Godlineſs, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekneſs. Let *us fight the good fight of Faith*, and ſo *lay hold on eternal life*, 1 Tim. 6. 11, 12. And this leads us unto the following part of the words: namely.

2. We have the *Motive* to excite and provoke us, to exerciſe our ſelves to *Piety* and Righteouſneſs, propounded to us more particularly and diſtinctly; and therein the Truth, of the foregoing part of the words, opened and evidenced: namely, *having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; of this preſent momentany ſtate we are now in, and of that eternal one we ſhall enter upon, and have an everlaſting enjoyment of, when we are removed hence, and ſhall be here no more.

But now, before we come to ſpeak unto the *Motive* and enforcement, as it is here more particularly and diſtinctly expreſt, and evidenced to us in the latter part of the Text; we may a little, uſefully fore-conſider theſe following things: to wit.

1. *What* it is, that hath the *promiſe* and *promiſes* abſolutely Annex't unto it, and entailed

tailed upon it, and that is *godlineſs*; as that ſignifies *the whole duty of man*; as we have before noted and ſhewn: and ſo the promiſes, are firſt of all made, unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is Emphatically, and moſt Eminently called, *God's holy one*, or *godly* one, Pſal. 16. 10. *Who loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity: therefore God*, even his God, *hath anointed him with the oyl of gladneſs above his fellows*; becauſe he was more Godly and holy then his Fellows, *Heb.* 1. 8, 9. He was one that knew no ſin, that did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; but he always did thoſe things that pleaſed his father. And when the due ſeaſon was come, *he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Croſs*; as he received commandment from his father. And becauſe, in obedience to his father, he laid down his life, and hath taken it up again; *therefore the father loveth him*; and ſo loveth him, *that he hath given all things into his hands*, Joh. 10. 17, 18. with, chap. 3. 35. And unto him the promiſes were made *Originally*, and moſt fully: *now to Abraham and his ſeed were the promiſes made: he ſaith not, unto ſeeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy ſeed, which is Chriſt*, Gal. 3. 16. And he is become the root and foundation of *godlineſs* for us, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. With-

out whoſe Abaſement, Death, Reſurrection, and Exaltation, there had been no forgiveneſs of ſins for us; nor could we have been made partakers of the favour of God; nor would Repentance and Faith have availed us any thing, *Heb.* 9. 22. 1 *Cor.* 15. 12, 17, 20 Nor could we have come unto God, ſo as to have received mercy and ſalvation from him, *Joh.* 14. 6. *Act.* 4. 11, 12. But now in *Him*, who by the grace of God, taſted death for every man, and roſe again; *all the promiſes of God are yea, and in him Amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. And *if we be Chriſt's* (to wit, in a ſpecial conſideration,) *then are we Abraham's ſeed, and Heirs according to promiſe*, Gal. 3. 16, 26, 29. And Heirs of the promiſes, in being united by Faith unto him, who is the *Heir of all things*, Heb. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 23. 1 Joh. 5. 11, 12. The promiſes are not made with, or abſolutely aſſured unto, any perſon in a perſonal Conſideration; but to ſuch manner of perſons, as do exerciſe themſelves unto Godlineſs and Righteouſneſs. Thus the everlaſting Covenant, which did contain exceeding great and precious promiſes, was not made with *Abraham*, as a man known by that name ſimply; but it was made with him as he was a Truly *Pious* and upright man. Thus it is ſaid, *the Lord appeared unto* Abraham, and ſaid unto him, *I am the Almighty God, walk before*

before me, and be thou perfect, or ſincere: *and I will make my Covenant between me, and thee*, &c. *Gen.* 17. 1, 2, 7, 8. And to the ſame purpoſe it is elſe-where ſaid, *thou foundeſt his heart faithful before thee, and madeſt a Covenant with him*, Neh. 9. 7, 8. And this *Covenant* was thus made with him, not for himſelf onely, but for his ſpiritual Seed alſo; and ſo it was made with him as *a father of many Nations*, Gen. 17.4,5,8. *Rom.* 4. 16, 17. And ſo thoſe that are *ſincere*, like unto him, are Heirs of the ſame Covenant, as to the choice things therein contained and aſſured, *Rom.* 4. 16, 17, 24. As the Apoſtle ſaith, *know ye therefore that they which are of Faith, the ſame are the Children of* Abraham.——*So then they which be of Faith, are bleſſed with faithful* Abraham, *Gal.* 3. 7, 9. with *Rom.* 4. 11, 13, 16.

It is out of God's love to righteouſneſs, that God doth delight in, and is well-pleaſed with, them that heartily follow it, and walk in it: *the righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs*: [and therefore] *his countenance doth behold the upright*, Pſal. 11. 7. *To him that ſoweth righteouſneſs ſhall be a ſure reward. Righteouſneſs tendeth to life*, Prov. 11. 17, 18. *In the way of righteouſneſs is life; and in the path way thereof, there is no death*, ch. 12. 26, 28. *Righteouſneſs keepeth him, that is upright in the way*,

way, chap. 13. 6. and chap. 8. 20. 21. And this is the general and conſtant Current of the holy Scriptures, both of the Prophets and Apoſtles; that not ſuch perſons *meerly*, but ſuch manner of perſons, graciouſly qualified perſons, are the Heires of the promiſes of life and ſalvation, and ſhall, ſo abiding, in due ſeaſon, inherit the bleſſings therein propounded, and thereby aſſured. *Who ſhall Aſcend into the hill of the Lord? and who ſhall ſtand in his holy place? he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lift up his ſoul unto vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully. He ſhall receive the bleſſing from the Lord, and righteouſneſs from the God of his ſalvation. This is the generation of them that ſeek him, that ſeek thy face,* O God of *Jacob. Selah. Pſal.* 15. and 24. 3. 6. When the Evangelical Prophet largely treats of the *Everlaſting Covenant*, and of the bleſſings thereof, in *Iſa.* 54. He then, in the cloſe of that Chapter, gives us to underſtand, who are the Heirs of it; and ſhall inherit the Bleſſings and Benefits of it, ſaying; *This is the Heritage of the ſervants of the Lord; and their righteouſneſs is of me,* ſaith the Lord. And then by his ſervant the Prophet, he makes this Proclamation, and Invitation; *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; (no worth, no worthineſs:)——Hearken diligently*

unto

unto me, and eat ye that which is good; and let your ſoul delight it ſelf in fatneſs. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your ſoul ſhall live: and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David. As if he ſhould ſay; if ye will indeed learn the way of my people, (as *Jer* 12. 16.) and ſincerely become my ſervants alſo; then, upon theſe terms, you ſhall be heirs with them of the ſame Covenant, and inherit the ſame bleſſing with them, *Iſay.* 54. 17. and *chap.* 55. 1, 2, 3. *Pſal.* 84. 11, 12. and 125.

And to the ſame purpoſe our Lord and Saviour, and his Holy Apoſtles have ſpoken to us in the Word of the Lord: *My Sheep,* ſaith our Lord Jeſus, *hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of mine hand,* *John.* 10. 27, 30. and *chap.* 14. 21, 23. *Matth.* 7. 24, 27. *Col.* 1. 22, 23. 2 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4, 8, 10, 11. 1 *John* 2. 24, 28. *Rev.* 22. 12, 14. *The way of the Lord,* even ſincere Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, is *ſtrength to the upright,* *Prov.* 10. 29. And *he that keepeth his way, preſerveth his ſoul,* *Prov.* 16. 17. *But as for them that turn aſide to their crooked paths, the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace ſhall be upon* Iſrael, even upon the *Iſrael* of God,

Pſal.

Pſal. 125. 5. with *Gal.* 6. 15. 16.

For Perſons therefore to rely on, and bolſter up themſelves with, the Promiſes, while they walk ungodlily, and their way is perverſe before the Lord; this is to *turn the grace of our God into Laſciviouſneſs*, and *Wantonneſs*, as Jude 4. And this is that which is highly provoking unto the Holy Lord God. Hence *Moſes* gives this *caution* to the People of *Iſrael*, (when they entered into a *Covenant* with the Lord their God, and into an *Oath* which the Lord made with them;) ſaying unto them; *Leſt there ſhould be among you man or woman, Family or Tribe, whoſe heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and ſerve the Gods of theſe Nations: leſt there ſhould be among you, a root that beareth Gall and wormwood: and it come to paſs when he heareth the words of this Oath*, or *Curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination*, or *ſtubbornneſs of mine heart, to add drunkeneſs to Thirſt; the Lord will not ſpare him, but then the Anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man; and all the curſes written in this book ſhall lye upon him; and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under Heaven*, &c. By all which, and much more that follows in the place referred to, it evidently appears, that it is a fearful thing, wonderfully provoking

ing unto God, and Fatally pernicious to our own ſouls, to preſume that we ſhall have the benefits of the promiſes, though we exerciſe not our ſelves unto *Godlineſs*, unto which the promiſes are intaild: or to conclude, that though there be a failure, a wilful failure, found with us in performing the conditions of the *Covenant*; yet God is bound on his part, in point of fidelity, not to deprive us, but to make us partakers, of the bleſſings thereof, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 13, 18. 20, 28. with *Heb.* 12. 14, 15. 17. whereas the promiſes are onely made unto *Godlineſs* abſolutely; and to us reſpectively and conditionally, to wit, upon our good behaviour, *in living Righteouſly and Godly in Chriſt Jeſus.* And otherwiſe, if we believe not, he is *faithful*, and cannot deny himſelf, but muſt therefore *deny us, if we deny him. Of theſe things*, ſaith St. *Paul.* to *Timothy*, *put them in remembrance*, &c. 2 *Tim.* 2. 13, 14. *When I ſhall ſay to the righteous*, ſaith the Lord, *that he ſhall ſurely live: if he truſt to his own righteouſneſs, and commit iniquity, all his righteouſneſs ſhall not be remembred: but for his iniquity that he hath committed*, he ſhall dye for it; whatever God formerly ſaid to him, when he was a righteous Perſon, *Ezek.* 33. 12, 13, 18. *Now the juſt ſhall live by faith*, faith

ſaith the Lord: *but if he draw back; my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, *Heb.* 10. 38. O let this be ſeriouſly minded, and duly conſidered by us all; that we deceive not our ſelves to our endleſs deſtruction. But I ſhall here enlarge no further to it.

2. Again, Let us alſo mind and conſider, how *Godlineſs*, or our Exerciſe of *Godlineſs*, *is profitable unto all things*; and that is, *having the promiſe*; and therein a ſure and full reward propoſed and aſcertained to us; not of *Debt*, but of *Grace*. *Godlineſs is our Duty*; and therefore we can *merit* nothing, by our exerciſing our ſelves thereto: as our bleſſed Saviour ſignifies, when he thus ſaith unto his Diſciples; *When ye ſhall have done all theſe things which are commanded you, ſay we are unprofitable ſervants, we have done that which was our duty to do*, *Luk.* 17. 7, 10. But God, who is rich in mercy, hath of his free grace, made many great and precious promiſes to our duty; and to us upon our ſincere performance thereof; and ſo hath made it our higheſt, and in truth our onely real intereſt and advantage, to exerciſe our ſelves to unfeigned Piety and Holineſs. There is nothing in our *Godlineſs*, that can deſerve the pardon of our ſins, or the ſpecial Favour of God, *Matth.* 18. 25. *Luk.* 7. 42. Nay indeed, in our Beſt and moſt Religious, and

Pious

Pious exerciſes and Performances, there is ſo much Pollution, and Imperfection found, that our holy Things, our ſpiritual Sacrifices, could not come with acceptance upon God's Altar, if our High-Prieſt, did not continually take away the iniquities cleaving to them, and perfume them with the Odours, of the Incenſe of his moſt Powerful and well-pleaſing Interceſſion, *Exod.* 28 38. with 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Rev.* 5. 8. But the God of all grace, hath frankly and freely entailed the promiſes, on ſincere Godlineſs and Honeſty. And therefore *the promiſe* is oftentimes oppoſed to the *Law*, as *that* did call for and command an unſinning Obedience; and ſo made the reward to be of debt to every ſuch Performer of it. *To him that worketh*, (namely, that continueth in all things written in the Book of the Law to do them,) *is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt, Rom.* 4. 4. The Righteouſneſs which is of the Law ſaith, *The man that doth thoſe things* (ſinleſly and conſtantly,) *Shall live in them, Rom.* 10. 5. *Gal.* 3. 12. But, I ſay, the *Promiſe* by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, is oppoſed to the Law in this ſenſe. To this purpoſe are theſe ſayings of the Apoſtle: *For the Promiſe that Abraham ſhould be the Heir of the World, was not to him, or to his ſeed through the Law:*—— *For if they that be of the Law are Heirs*

Faith

Faith is made void, and the promiſe made of none effect, Rom. 4. 13, 14, 16. *For if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of promiſe: but God gave it to Abraham by promiſe.* ——*If there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that Believe*, Gal. 3. 17, 18, 21, 22. Luk. 1. 72, 73. And therefore, ſeeing *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, by having the promiſe entailed on it; it plainly and evidently appears, that it becomes profitable unto us by the grace of God, and worthineſs of the mediation of Chriſt; and not from any merit of our exerciſing our ſelves thereto, *Rom.* 3. 22, 24. *where is boaſting then? It is excluded: by what Law? of Works, nay but by the Law of Faith*, Rom. 3. 27. By Grace ye are ſaved, through Faith, and that not of your ſelves; it is the *gift of God*, not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt, *Eph.* 2. 5, 9. with *Gal.* 3. 22. and *Rom.* 4. 16.

3. Conſider we alſo, *how far Godlineſs hath the promiſe*; and that is, ſo far, and ſo far only, as it is truly and really *Profitable*, and for our advantage, in the judgment and account of him who hath enſured it to Godlineſs: as it is here expreſt, to wit, *Godlineſs*

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is profitable,——having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. It hath not the promiſe of what our unrenewed, craving, and luſtful ſpirits might judge deſirable and valuable; but of what God knows to be really advantageous for us, both as to this preſent life, and that which is to come. Now in and for this life, we may poſſibly deſire that which would prove a ſnare to us, if we had it: or we may *ask amiſs, to conſume upon our luſts*, Jam. 4. 2, 3. But now, Godlineſs hath not the promiſe of *that*, becauſe it is not *profitable* for us. And as with reſpect to the life to come, ſome may conceive they ſhall then marry, and have their fill of Love and Carnal delights and pleaſures, as, *Mat.* 22. 28, 30. But now, Godlineſs hath not the promiſe of theſe ſenſual and contemptible Enjoyments; but of that which is infinitely better; of all ſpiritual and heavenly delights and ſatisfactions, *Pſal.* 36. 7, 9. *Rom.* 8. 23. And ſo it hath the promiſe of all that which is, and only of that which is, *profitable* for us, in our preſent and future ſtate. Like unto what the Scripture elſewhere ſpeaks, ſaying: *the young Lions do lack, and ſuffer hunger: but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing*, Pſal. 34. 9, 10. *The Lord God is a Sun and Shield, he will give grace and glory: no good*

thing (here during the kingdom of his grace, or hereafter, in the kingdom of his glory) *will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, Blessed* (is, and for ever shall be) *the man that trusteth in thee*, Psal. 84. 10, 12. And thus also our Saviour, when he excites and encourages his disciples, to exercise themselves to pious devotion in addressing themselves unto God, saying, *Ask and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:* He presently after signifies to them, *what* they shall receive and find; (and so intimately directs them what to ask, and seek for;) to wit, that which is really *good* for them: saying unto them, *if ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?* Mat. 7. 7, 9, 11. *Deut.* 28. 1, 12. To which I shall enlarge no further in this place.

Now then, having premised and noted these three things, which deserve our most serious consideration: we come to consider, and speak unto the Motive and enforcement, as it is here more particularly and distinctly expresst and evidenced to us by the Apostle: and so *Godliness is profitable:*

1. *Having promise of the life that now is*; of this present frail state we are now upon, while

while we are in this old, passing, and corruptible world: and so it hath the *promise* of the good things directly appertaining to this passing, short, and transitory life.

2. And it hath the promise of a *first-fruits of the life of God*; or of a new & spiritual life; which will be compleat and consummate hereafter, in our abiding in the faith of our Lord Jesus.

1. I say, *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is*; even of the good things more directly appertaining, to the continuance and comfort of this short, transitory, and uncertain life; as may appear to us in the following particulars.

1. Godliness hath *the promise of this life it self*, and of the *continuance* of it, while it may be for the glory of God; and so, while it may be truly *profitable* for them, that unfeignedly apply themselves unto the power of Godliness. Their times of health, and life, are in the hands of God; as *David* saith of his; and it is not in the power of Satan, or of any of their enemies, to put an end to their lives, when they please, *Psal.* 31. 13, 15. Indeed, *in his hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind*, Job 12. 10. Mat. 10. 29, 31. But he is *especially the Saviour of them that believe*, 1 Tim. 4. 8, 9, 10. Job 1. 9, 10, and chap. 2. 6. And while the *continu-*

nance of this life is profitable for them, it ſhall be granted unto them. Hence it is obſervable, that when the *Pſalmiſt* had been ſaying, as we before noted, that *they that ſeek the Lord, ſhall not want any good thing:* He then immediately addes; *come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord; what man is he that deſireth life, and loveth days, that he may ſee good?* and then he directs them to apply themſelves to *Piety*, and the fear of the Lord, that they may enjoy life, as long as it is good for them; ſaying; *keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; ſeek peace, and purſue it; For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous*, &c. *Pſal.* 34. 10, 12, 15. And this aſſurance & encouragement, to follow vertue and goodneſs did not only reſpect them, that lived before our Lord took upon him our nature: (in which times they had, as to the outſide of them however, more, and more frequently, temporal bleſſings ſet before them, and aſſured to them:) but the ſame *Motive* is made uſe of by the Apoſtle *Peter* ſince, to move and prevail with us, to abhor that which is evil, and cleave unto and purſue that which is good before God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 10, 11, 12. Thus alſo when the *Pſalmiſt* pronounceth them bleſſed, that exerciſe love and mercy towards ſuch

as

as are indigent and neceſſitous, ſaying, *bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor*, the weak, or ſick: he then declares this as one particular, in which a merciful perſon ſhall be bleſſed, namely, *the Lord will preſerve him, and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth*, Pſal. 41. 1, 2. All things are theirs, who are *Chriſt's*; and ſo particularly *life*, even this preſent life, is theirs alſo, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 23. Hence we have ſuch ſayings as theſe, in the book of the *Proverbs*: *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life*, Prov. 10. 16. *Righteouſneſs tendeth to life*, chap. 11. 19. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it ſhall abide ſatisfied*, chap. 19. 23. *He that followeth after righteouſneſs and mercy findeth life*, chap. 21. 21. *The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord is life*, chap. 22. 4. All which *Proverbs*, though they may have a principal reſpect unto, a more excellent life than is here enjoyable; yet they have alſo reſpect unto our enjoyment of this preſent life, while the continuance of it is a mercy to us, if we be, and abide in the true fear of the Lord. God is the God of the righteous, in a peculiar conſideration, and the God of their lives; therefore they need not fear, with any fear that hath torment in it, (1 *Joh* 4. 18.) *What their enemies can do unto them*, Pſal. 118. 6, 9.

Heb. 13. 5, 6. To this purpoſe the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, ſaying, *the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?* Pſal. 27. 1. And when he was in great afflictions, and had many enemies that conſpired and endeavoured to deſtroy him, he encouraged himſelf herein, that God was the God of his life. Hence when he ſaith, *Deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of thy water-ſpouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me:* He doth then thus comfort himſelf; *yet the Lord will command his loving-kindneſs in the day-time; and in the night his Song ſhall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life,* Pſal. 42. 7, 8, 9, 11.

Object. But againſt what hath been laſt ſaid, ſome may *Object* and ſay: *But are not godly perſons oftentimes ſhort-liv'd in this world? are not their days as few in number as other mens are, and ſometimes fewer? are they not untimely removed out of this world, as well as thoſe that live ungodly?*

Anſw. To this *objection* I ſhall deſire to return ſome anſwer in theſe following particulars. Namely,

1. Sometimes ſuch as are *godly in the main,* may be guilty of ſome great and provoking miſcarriages, and thereby procure to themſelves an untimely cutting off: and ſo they may ſay of themſelves as good King *Hezekiah*

Hezekiah did of himſelf; namely, *our age is departed, and is removed from us as a ſhepheards Tent: we have cut off like a Weaver our lives*, Iſa. 38. 11, 12. Thus it was with *Moſes* and *Aaron*, thoſe two eminently holy ones; becauſe *they believed not God, to ſanctify him in the eyes of the Children of* Iſrael; therefore ſaid the Lord to them, *ye ſhall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them*, Numb. 20. 11, 24. *Though he forgave their iniquities, yet he took vengeance of their inventions*, as, Pſal. 99. And doubtleſs many of them whoſe *Carcaſes fell in the wilderneſs*, and who were cut off before their time, were good men in the main; and yet were cut off for their unbelief, *Numb.* 14. Whence the Apoſtle admoniſhes the believers, to be warned by their harmes and miſcarriages, *Heb.* 3. and chap. 4. 1, 11. And when *David*, out of a prudential conſideration, *was dumb with ſilence, and held his peace, even from good*; then God threatned to cut him off by his afflicting hand; which made him cry out unto God for mercy, ſaying, *remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand:——O ſpare me a little, that I may recover ſtrength; before I go hence, and be no more*, Pſal. 39. Job 36. 17, 21. But now, this nothing oppoſes what we have been

ſpeaking of; for theſe, and ſuch like pious perſons, were not ſo puniſhed, or untimely removed, becauſe they exerciſed themſelves to *godlineſs*; but becauſe at ſome times they did not exerciſe themſelves thereto, but did *partake with others in their ſins, and ſo did partake with them in their judgments here*, that they might not be condemned with the world hereafter, as *Rev.* 18. 4. 1 *Cor.* 11. 30, 31, 32. And thus it hath fared, and may do ſo again, with many ſuch as were good perſons in the main.

2. Sometimes God in mercy removes *good perſons*, before he pours out ſome heavy Judgments on the Nation, or place in which they lived: ſo the Lord ſaith concerning *Abijah*, the Son of *Jeroboam* King of *Iſrael*; concerning whom the Prophet in the name of the Lord ſaith, *all* Iſrael *ſhall mourn for him:—for he only of* Jeroboam *ſhall come to the grave, becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing toward the Lord God of* Iſrael, 1 King. 14. 1, 13. And the ſame may be ſaid in part, concerning that very excellent and good Prince, King *Joſiah*; concerning whom the Lord ſaith: *Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou ſhall be gathered to thy grave in peace; neither ſhall thine eyes ſee all the evil, that I will bring upon this place, and upon the Inhabitants of the*

ſame,

ſame, 2 Chron. 34. 26, 27, 28. And to this purpoſe ſome underſtand thoſe words of the Lord, ſpoken by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, namely; *Come, my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee, hide thy ſelf as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-paſt. For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place, to puniſh the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity*, &c. Iſa. 26. 20, 21. with Job 14. 13. Or God may in much mercy remove ſome Timerous, and feeble-minded upright-hearted ones, before a day of Fiery Tryal come, which might be too hot, and too heavy for them, *leſt they ſhould put forth their hand to iniquity*, to ſave themſelves, and ſecure themſelves from ſuch ſufferings, *Pſal.* 125. 3. So our Lord Jeſus, ſpeaking to the Angel of the Church in *Philadelphia*, which had but a little ſtrength, ſaith; *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of Temptation, which ſhall come upon all the world*, &c. Rev. 3. 8, 9, 10. Now in ſuch Caſes, or in others of a like nature, it would not be good for them which are ſo removed, to have their lives longer continued to them; but it is profitable for them to be taken away, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2.

3. Sometimes pious men are taken out of this world, as a *gracious reward* of their more

Eminent

Eminent piety, and abundant goodneſs that is found with them, above what is found with others. As by reaſon of the great and more hainous wickedneſs, committed by ſome evil men, their iniquity is more ſpeedily full; and they are in judgment untimely cut off, even before they *have lived out half their days*, Pſal. 55. 21. Eccl. 7. 17. So alſo on the other hand, ſome pious perſons may in much mercy to themſelves be removed, and taken out of this world into a better, before old age and decrepid years come upon them. Thus *Enoch* was the *ſhorteſt liver* by far of all, mentioned in *Gen.* 5. But the very reaſon of his being ſo early removed from hence was, his ſignal and more abundant *piety* and goodneſs: *Enoch walked with God, and he was not: for God took him*, Gen. 5. 22, 24. with Heb. 11. 5, 6. To which things I ſhall not, though I might, further enlarge.

But to conclude this particular, as I have ſaid, ſo again I ſay, *godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life*, of the life it ſelf; namely, of the continuance thereof; while the only wiſe God judges it good and *profitable* for them.

2. And in order to the preſervation and continuance of this natural life, while it may be uſeful and good for them, *godlineſs hath the promiſe of needful proviſion*, for them that ſincerely

ſincerely exerciſe themſelves thereunto; and are diligent in their lawful vocation, Trade, or way of Imployment. Indeed, God out of his general mercy and bounty doth provide for all man-kind, during the day of his grace and patience: *the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works,* for the good of mankind, *Pſal.* 145. 8, 9, 17. *He giveth food to all fleſh, for his mercy endureth for ever,* Pſal. 136. 25. *He maketh his Sun to Riſe upon the evil, as well as upon the good: and he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil,* Mat. 5. 44, 45, 48. Luk. 6. 35, 36. He left not himſelf without witneſs towards the Heathen, but *did them good, and gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling their hearts with food and gladneſs,* Act. 14. 16, 17. and chap. 17. 24, 28. But now, as with reſpect to them that ſerve him acceptably, with reverence and Godly fear, he provides for them, as for his children, in an eſpecial conſideration; and as *Heirs* of his *Covenant* and promiſes. The Lord is gracious, and full of compaſſion. *He hath given meat to them that fear him, he will ever be mindful of his Covenant,* Pſal. 111. 4, 5. And it was *David's* obſervation, when he was grown into years, that God did always provide, what was good for the righteous: *I have been young,* ſaith he, *and now am old,*

yet

yet have I never ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread. He is ever merciful, & lendeth, and his ſeed is in the bleſſing, Pſal. 37. 25, 26, 27. And when the ſame holy Prophet, pronounceth the bleſſedneſs of the truly Godly perſon, ſaying; *bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandements:* he then gives us to underſtand, that this is a part of his bleſſedneſs, namely, *wealth and riches ſhall be in his houſe*, &c. Pſal. 112. 1, 3. Prov. 22. 4.

It muſt be acknowledged, that God hath not promiſed to them that walk uprightly before him, an abundance of outward and worldly good things; or ſuch a fulneſs as ſome others enjoy, out of his general goodneſs and kindneſs, who have their portion in this life; and whoſe bellies God filleth with his hid treaſure, as *Pſal.* 17. 14. But that Competency which he gives them, with his bleſſing, is better then the whole world without it. (And indeed, as our bleſſed Saviour ſaith, *a mans life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth*, Luk. 12. 15.) *A little that a righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked*, Pſal. 37. 16. *Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, then great treaſure, and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is*, (however, where men are in the well pleaſed love and favour

favour of God;) *then a ſtalled Oxe, and hatred therewith. Better is a little with righteouſneſs, then great revennues without right*, Prov. 15. 16, 17. and chap. 16. 8. And he hath aſſured them, that they that ſeek and ſerve him, ſhall not want any thing that is really good and *profitable* for them, *Pſal.* 34. 8, 9, 10. and 84. 10, 11, 12.

And ſuch Promiſes are not only propounded and aſcertained to the Fearers of the Lord, before the coming of the Son of God into the world; but ſince that time alſo Our Saviour doth not only direct his diſciples, thus to pray to their Father which is in heaven, to wit, *Give us this day our daily bread*, Mat. 6. 11. But alſo in the ſame chapter, gives them this aſſurance and encouragment; *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs: and all theſe things ſhall be added to you:* to wit, what ye ſhall eat, and what ye ſhall drink, and wherewith ye ſhall be cloathed. And ſo, whatſoever your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of, ſhall be given to you. And this is propounded to them, that they might have their converſation without covetouſneſs and careſulneſs, *Mat.* 6. 31, 32, 33. *Luk.* 12. 29, 31, 32. So the Apoſtle ſaith, *having food and raiment, let us therewith be content.* (This we ſhall have, in leading our lives in Godlineſs

ſineſs and honeſty.) *But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in deſtruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil,* 1 Tim. 6. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And again he ſaith to the believing *Hebrews: let your converſation be without Covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as ye have: for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee: ſo that we may boldly ſay, the Lord is mine helper, and I will not fear what man ſhall do unto me,* Heb. 13. 5, 6. with Deut. 31. 1, 6.

Yea, and there are Promiſes and aſſurances given to them, that he will take care of, and provide for, his faithful ſervants, in a time of ſcarcity and want; when he orders cleaneſs of Teeth in thoſe quarters, or Nations, in which God hath bounded their Habitations, *Job* 5. 20, 22. *Behold,* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, attend to, and minde this diligently) *the eye of* Jehovah *is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy: ——To keep them alive in famine,* Pſal. 33. 18, 19. *They ſhall not be aſhamed in the evil time; and in the days of famine they ſhall be ſatisfied;* they ſhall have enough to hold their ſouls in life withall, Pſal. 37. 19, 25. *The Lord will not ſuffer the ſoul of the righteous* (to wit, them, or their perſons) *to famiſh:*

famiſh: but he caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked, Prov. 10. 3. And in ſuch times, in times of death and famine, he hath wonderfully and Marvellouſly taken care of, and kept alive, ſuch as waited upon him, and walked before him, in former days: and with him is *no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning*, Gen. 12. 10. and chap. 26. 1. and chap. 42. 5. But no more to that particular.

3. Godlineſs is profitable, having alſo the *promiſe of the life that now is*, as to God's *ſpecial and gracious protection* and *ſalvation*, from all ſuch dangers and troubles, as might be indeed evil and hurtful to them: he is eſpecially the Saviour of them, that truſt in him before the Sons of men, and whoſe hearts are perfect towards him: hence the *Pſalmiſt* thus pours out his heart before the Lord, ſaying, *ſhew thy marvellous loving kindneſs, O thou that ſaveſt* by thy right hand, *them which put their truſt in thee, from thoſe that riſe up againſt them*, Pſal. 17. 7, 8, 9. and 31. 19, 20. *His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong on the behalf of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him*, 2 Chron. 16. 9. Pſal. 9. 9. 10. *They that dwell in the ſecret of the moſt High, ſhall lodge under the ſhadow of the Almighty.——He will cover them with his feathers, and under his wings they ſhall truſt:*

truſt: his Truth ſhall be their ſhield and buckler, Pſal. 91. 1, 3, 4. So he is ſaid to be *a buckler to them that walk uprightly,* Prov. 2. 7. *And a Shield to them that put their truſt in him,* chap. 30. 5. *The name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.* Prov. 18. 10. As with reſpect to them that are wicked, and ſtubbornly ſin againſt God, *Salvation is far from them,* Pſal. 119. 155. Iſa. 59. 11, 12. But, ſurely *his Salvation is nigh them that fear him,* Pſal. 15. 9. Be their enemies then never ſo numerous, have they never ſo much power in their hands, or on their ſide: (as *Eccleſ.* 4. 1.) Be they never ſo full of Enmity and Malice, towards ſuch as are upright; and never ſo full of ſubtilty and cunning Craftineſs, to accompliſh their evil and miſchievous deſigns againſt them, who, out of the fear of God, dare not have fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs: yet they need not be afraid of them, with any fear of amazement: *the Lord of Hoſts is for them, the God of* Jacob *is their refuge,* Pſal. 46. And till he gives their enemies permiſſion, they cannot Touch an Hair of their heads. And of this the grand-Enemy and adverſary of the upright-hearted is aware: hence he ſaith to the Lord concerning *Job*; *haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe,*

and

and about all that he hath on every ſide? Job 1. 9, 11. And our Lord Jeſus thus ſpeaks for the encouragement of his ſincere diſciples: *Are not two ſparrows ſold for a farthing? and one of them ſhall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very haires of your head are all numbred:* (So that not one of them ſhall be plucked off, until he give that liberty to their enemies. And not one of them ſhall be plucked off, but he will miſs it.) *Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value then many ſparrows,* Mat. 10. 29, 31. Luk. 12. 6, 7. with chap. 21. 17, 18. And *Rulers,* who are Gods Miniſters, *are not a Terrour to good works, but to evil,* Rom. 13. 3, 4. And their hearts are in the hands of the Lord, and he will order and over-rule them, for the good and protection of thoſe, that are upright in their heart and way, while it may be for their profit. *By me,* ſaith *Wiſdom, Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice. By me Princes Rule, and Nobles, even all the Judges of the earth. I Love them that love me:* and therefore he will order them, whom he ſets over them in this world, as may be for his glory, and for their good and benefit, *Prov.* 8. 15, 16, 17. And in former times, *he ſuffered no man to do them harm, but rebuked Kings for the ſakes* of his dearly beloved people; *when they were few in number, yea very*

 few,

few, and ſtrangers in the land: ſaying, *touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm,* 1 Chron. 16. 19, 22. Pſal. 105. 11, 12, 15. Bleſſed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his benefits, even the God of our ſalvation. He that is our God is the God of ſalvation, and unto God the Lord belong the Iſſues from death, *Pſal.* 68. 18, 19, 20. O let us truſt in him at all times, and pour out our hearts before him: for he is a refuge for us:——*Power doth belong unto him, and alſo with him is mercy,* Pſal. 59. 16, 17. and 62. 8, 10, 12.

4. *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is,* even of all that is *profitable* in this world: and therefore when it is uſeful and needful for them, that exerciſe themſelves thereto, that they ſhould meet with troubles and Tryals here, he will order them unto them: theſe may be *profitable* for them; and their Heavenly Father, when he chaſtens them, doth not do ſo, *for his own pleaſure, but for their profit;* (not that they might be rich and great here, but) *that they might be partakers of his holineſs,* Heb. 12. 10, 12. Afflictions are for the Health of the Soul: and *Phyſick,* when it is given by this able, faithful, and skilful *Phyſician,* is as wholeſome as, yea, may be more wholeſome than *Food. It is good for me,* ſaith *David, that I have been afflicted:* that is,

is, he doth hereby acknowledge, that it was uſeful and profitable for him. And again he ſaith; *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me*, Pſal. 119. 71, 75. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Almighty*, Job 5. 17. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou Chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy Law*, Pſal. 94. 11, 12, 13. And the Apoſtle, as guided by the infallible ſpirit of God, gives us this aſſurance, to wit, *All that will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 11, 12. And that the afflictions which he is ordering to them, eſpecially ſuch as they endure for his names ſakes, even for the word, and way of truth, may be uſeful and profitable for, and unto their Souls: Therefore,

1. He doth promiſe and aſſure us, upon his faithful word, that he will order afflictions and troubles in *meaſure*; both as to the weight, and as to the continuance of them: *the remainder of* man's *wrath*, that would not tend to his praiſe, in the profit of his people, *he will reſtrain*, Pſal. 76. 10. *The Rod of the wicked ſhall not Reſt upon the Lot of the Righteous, leſt the Righteous put forth their hands to Iniquity*, Pſal. 125. 3. *In meaſure, when it ſhooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he*

ſtayeth his rough-wind, in the day of the Eaſt-wind. By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob *be purged*, &c. To wit, it ſhall therefore be purged, becauſe God doth in meaſure debate; otherwiſe it would conſume, not profitably purge: even as a Phyſician will do more hurt then good, if his Phyſick be over ſtrong; and may then purge away the life, inſtead of purging away the Noxious Humours, in order to cure and health, *Iſa.* 27. 8, 9. So the Lord promiſeth, ſaying, *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made*, &c. Iſa. 57. 16, 19. And to the ſame purpoſe the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, ſaying, *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man*, (ſuch as is moderate) *and God is faithful* (for the future) *who will not ſuffer you to be Tempted, above that ye are able: but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape*, (or, give an Iſſue) *that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from Idolatry.* Walk not in any crooked path, uſe no indirect, or unwarrantable method to ſave your ſelves, or to prevent, or extricate your ſelves from troubles and afflictions; but *commit your ſouls unto God in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* 1 Cor. 10. 13, 14. with 1 Pet. 4. 19.

2. When

2. When he orders Trials and Sufferings unto thoſe that exerciſe themſelves unto true Piety, he will *keep them from evil*; from that which would really be evil to them; from the evil deſign of Satan and his inſtruments; namely, from ſin, and from everlaſting deſtruction. *Evil ſhall ſlay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous ſhall be guilty*, or deſolate: But, *the Lord redeemeth the ſoul of his ſervants, and none of them that truſt in him ſhall be guilty*, or deſolate, Pſal. 34. 19, 22. and 91. 9, 10. He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved: *The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all evil: he ſhall preſerve thy ſoul*, Pſal. 121. *There ſhall no evil happen to the juſt*, Prov. 12. 21. And our Lord Jeſus, when he addreſſeth himſelf to his Father, in his laſt ſolemne Prayer before his paſſion; though he prays not, that God would keep his reall diſciples from perſecution, but ſuppoſes they ſhould meet with hatred and trouble from the world: yet he thus expreſſeth himſelf, *I pray not that thou ſhouldeſt take them out of the world, but that thou ſhouldeſt keep them from the evil*, Joh. 17. 14, 15. And his Father always heareth him, and grants unto him all his deſires, *Joh.* 11. 41, 42. And the Apoſtle gives this aſſurance unto the believers, *God is faithful, who will eſtabliſh you, and keep you from evil*, 2 Theſ. 3. 3. Yea,

not only ſo, but (as we have ſaid) he will do them good by all their Afflictions and Tribulations: and this the Apoſtle confidently aſſures the believers of, ſaying, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the Called according to purpoſe.*——*Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?*——*Nay, in all theſe things we are more then Conquerours, through him that loved us*, Rom. 8. 28, 35, 37, 38, 39. In the moſt ſevere providences he ordereth unto them, he doth deſign, and is effecting and promoting their benefit and advantage: as he ſent the upright in the Church of *Judah*, out of their own Land, *into the land of the Caldeans, for their good*, Jer. 24. 5, 6, 7.

3. He hath promiſed, that he will *vouchſafe unto them his gracious preſence* in all the troubles, afflictions, and hardſhips, which they endure for his Name and Goſpel's ſake; to keep them from evil, and from the fear of evil; and to comfort and chear their hearts: *The Lord is my Shepheard*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *I ſhall not want---Yea though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear none evil: for thou art with me, thy rod, and thy ſtaffe they comfort me*, Pſal. 23. 1, 4.

When

When *Jacob* was taking his journey, with his family into *Egypt*, (in which land God had fore-told *Abraham*, that his ſeed ſhould be in great affliction for a long time, *Gen.* 15. 12, 13.) then God ſpake unto *Iſrael* in the viſions of the night, and ſaid,---*I am God, the God of thy father, fear not to go down into Egypt*:---*I will go down with thee into Egypt*, &c. And doubtleſs, this was a great Encouragement unto him, and did animate him againſt all diſcouragements, and occaſions of fainting: and this was remembred by him, and propounded by him alſo to his Son *Joſeph*, *Gen.* 46, 1, 4. with chap. 48. 21. Exod. 33. 14, 15. And God was as good as his promiſe; for when the children of *Iſrael* were in very great affliction, and met with a *Fiery Tryal*, his gracious preſence was with them therein. And ſo much is ſignified in that *viſion* ſhewed unto *Moſes*, in mount *Horeb*: where, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midſt of a buſh, and he looked, and behold, *the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh* (ſignifying the Church of *Iſrael* in great Tribulation) *was not conſumed*. But how came this to paſs? whence was it, that the *buſh*, which of it ſelf is combuſtible, was not burnt up and conſumed? Surely it proceeded from hence, that *God was in the buſh*: it proceeded

from *the good will of him that dwelt in the buſh.* For when *Moſes* ſaid, *I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great* (and marvellous) *ſight, why the buſh is not burnt. Then the Lord called unto him out of the midſt of the Buſh,* (where he was, and dwelt) and ſaid,——*I am the God of thy father,* &c. Exod. 3. 1, 2, 4, 6. with Deut. 33. 16. Dan. 3. 25. *Thus ſaith the Lord that created thee, O* Jacob, *and he that formed thee, O* Iſrael: *fear not, for I have redeemed thee:----when thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they ſhall not over-flow thee: when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God,* &c. *Fear not, for I am with thee,* Iſa. 43. 1, 2, 3, 5. and chap. 41. 10, 14. But what doth all this concern us, may ſome ſay? God did promiſe his Gracious Preſence indeed with his Ancient people in their afflictions; but may we ſuck comfort and encouragement from the Breſts of their conſolation? Yes doubtleſs we may, if we be *Iſraelites indeed,* in whom is no guile. The believers are inſtructed to *behold* Iſrael *after the fleſh,* 1 Cor. 10. 18. And the Apoſtle acquaints us, that this is a conſiderable part of *the myſtery,* which was in former times hid from ages and generations,

but

but is now revealed and made manifeſt; namely, *That the* Gentiles *ſhould be fellow-heirs,* (to wit, with the *Jews,* of the promiſes which were made unto them;) *and of the ſame body, and partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt by the Goſpel,* Eph. 3. 3, 6, 8. Being built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, *They are no longer ſtrangers and forreigners, but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the houſhold of God,* Eph. 2. 13, 19, 20. with Rom. 11. 17. And more particularly, as to the buſineſs we are diſcourſing of; that promiſe and aſſurance, which the Lord by *Moſes* gives (not to *Joſhua* firſt of all, nor directly, as ſome learned men by miſtake affirm; but) unto all *Iſrael*; namely, that *he would not fail them, nor forſake them,* in their difficulties and troubles, if they were obedient to him: the very ſame encouragement, the Apoſtle doth propound unto the ſincere *Chriſtians*; to wit, *for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee:* whence the Apoſtle thus infers; *ſo that we may boldly ſay, the Lord is mine helper*; and, *I will not fear what man can do unto me,* Heb. 13. 5, 6. with Deut. 31. 1, 6. Yea,

4. If they that ſincerely exerciſe themſelves to true *Piety* and holineſs, be brought before Rulers and Governours for his names ſake; he will then ſtand by them, and guide

and

and direct them by his bleſſed Spirit, what to ſpeak, and how to anſwer their greateſt and wiſeſt Adverſaries, *Job* 36. 7. So our Lord ſaith unto his diſciples: *When* ſaith he, *they deliver you up, take no thought how, or what ye ſhall ſpeak: for it ſhall be given you in that hour what ye ſhall ſpeak:* for it is not ye that ſpeak, *but the ſpirit of your Father which ſpeaketh in you,* Mat. 10. 18, 20. And again, and at another time, he ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe to them, ſaying; *They ſhall perſecute you, delivering you up to the Synagogues, and into priſons, being brought before Kings and Rulers for my names ſake.—Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye ſhall anſwer. For I will give you a mouth, and wiſdom, which all your adverſaries ſhall not be able to gain-ſay, nor reſiſt,* Luk. 21. 12, 14, 15. And Saint *Stephen* found *Chriſt* as good as his word, when he encountred with, and was ſtifly oppoſed by ſeveral *Jews*: for it is ſaid, *They were not able to reſiſt the wiſdome, and the ſpirit by which he ſpake,* Act. 6. 9, 10. So when Saint *Paul* was brought before *Nero,* or ſome in Power and Authority under him, and was deſerted and forſaken by his friends in this eminent time of danger; he had then the gracious preſence and aſſiſtance of him that is faithful, of him that is true, with him. *At*

my

my firſt anſwer, ſaith he, *no man ſtood with me, but all men forſook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge; notwithſtanding the Lord ſtood with me, and ſtrengthned me:---And the Lord ſhall deliver me from every evil work, and will preſerve me unto his heavenly kingdome*, &c. 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17, 18.

5. And when thoſe that live in Godlineſs, and Honeſty, are in Tribulation, he will make them inſtrumental for his praiſe; and cauſe them to glorify him in the fires, as, *Iſa.* 24. 12, 14. *Behold*, ſaith the Lord to his afflicted people, *I have refined thee, but not with ſilver; I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own ſake, even for mine own ſake will I do it: for how ſhould my name be polluted?* Thereby giving us to underſtand, that he therefore caſt them into the fire, and fornace; and thereby refined and purified them, that they might be veſſels for the finer; that they might be to him, for a people, and for a Name, and for a praiſe, and for a glory: that they might *call on his name, and* (then he promiſeth) *I will hear them: I will ſay, is is my people; and they ſhall ſay*, Jehovah *is my God*, Iſa. 48. 10, 11. with. Zech. 13. 9. And when he ſent the upright ones into that ſevere, and long continued Affliction, and Captivity, in the land of the *Caldeans*, he ſaith concerning them, *I have ſent them out*

of

of this place, into the land of the Caldeans, *for good. It was indeed for their own good*; as we have before noted. But it was not onely ſo, but alſo for the good of them unto whom they were ſent, that they might *ſhew forth God's praiſe* among them, as *Iſa.* 43.21. And therefore we may take notice that the word [*their*] is not in the *Hebrew* Text, nor in the *Septuagint*, in *Jer.* 24. 5. But is put in by the Tranſlators. And indeed, the upright ones, in that grievous and ſevere Captivity, were eminent inſtruments for the glory of God, and for the good of all, that were under the Government and Empire of that great King of *Babylon*, (which was ſo large and extenſive, that all Nations did ſerve the King thereof, *Jer.* 27. 5, 6, 8.) As we may obſerve in one or two *inſtances*. After the *three Worthies had refuſed to worſhip the golden Image, which* Nebuchadnezzar *the King had ſet up*; and were for ſuch refuſal, by his command, *caſt into the burning fiery furnace*, and by God's Miraculous and wonderful Power *preſerved in*, and *delivered out of the fiery furnace*, without any hurt or harm: the King, by occaſion thereof, doth himſelf bleſs the *onely living and true God:* and not only ſo, but thus he ſaith, *therefore I make a decree, That every People, Nation and Language, which ſhall ſpeak any thing amiſs againſt the God of* Shadrach,

drach, Meſhach, *and* Abednego, *ſhall be cut in pieces, and their houſes ſhall be made a dunghill; becauſe there is no other God that can deliver after this ſort,* Dan. 3. 22, 30. See alſo ch. 41, 23. Another inſtance of the truth hereof was, when that vaſt *Empire* was *Tranſlated* to the *Medes,* and *Perſians*; the Nobles and Rulers under King *Darius* procured a *decree* and interdict, to be made and ſealed, that *whoſoever ſhould ask a petition of any God, or man, for thirty days, ſave of the King, ſhould be caſt into the Den of Lions. Daniel,* the man greatly beloved of God, was preſently found and declared a Tranſgreſſour of, and by this Law. The unwary King, though greatly unwilling, is forc't as it were to conſent, that *Daniel* ſhould ſuffer the penalty for the Tranſgreſſion of that interdict: *he is caſt into the Den of Lyons:* but God ſent his Angel, *and ſhut the Lyons Mouthes,* that they hurt him not: and he was taken out of the Den ſafe and ſound. *Then King* Darius *wrote unto all People, Nations, and Languages, that dwell in all the earth, Peace be multiplyed unto you. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my Kingdome, men tremble and fear before the God of* Daniel; *for he is the living God, and ſtedfaſt for ever, and his Kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed, and his dominion ſhall be even un-*

to the end, &c. Jer. 24. 5. with Dan. 6. 7, 10, 26, 27. By all which it plainly appears, what Eminent inſtruments of God's praiſe the ſincerely pious ones have been; and of great Good unto others, when they have been under great perſecution; and ſo Afflictions and Tryals were *profitable unto themſelves* in concluſion. And the Apoſtle, writing to the believing *Philippians*, ſaith; *I would ye ſhould underſtand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Goſpel; ſo that my bonds for Chriſt are manifeſt in all the* Pallace, *and in all other places. And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to ſpeak the word without fear*, Phil. 1. 12, 13, 14.

6. And laſtly, as to this matter; God hath promiſed, that he will, in due ſeaſon, *deliver them out of their Tribulations* and afflictions. And he will faithfully perform, what he hath ſo promiſed. *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles,---many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all*, Pſal. 34. 17, 19. *The Salvation of the righteous, is of the Lord*; he is their ſtrength in the time of trouble. *And the Lord will help them, and deliver them*;

them; *he will deliver them from the wicked, and ſave them, becauſe they truſt in him*, Pſal. 37. 39, 40. and 91. 14, 15. 2 *Tim.* 4. 18. By all which it doth evidently appear, that God will make *profitable* unto them, and cauſe all the afflictions which he orders, to work together for the good of them, who are undefiled in the way, and walk in the Law of the Lord.

Thus we have ſpoken ſomewhat unto the *promiſe of this life*, which *Godlineſs hath*; as to the things more directly appertaining to the good and benefit thereof: and ſhall now proceed on to what follows; to wit,

2. *Godlineſs hath alſo the promiſe of the life that now is*; namely, that in exerciſing our ſelves thereto, he will, while we are in this world, *bleſs us with ſpiritual bleſſings*; with thoſe bleſſings which more directly conduce to the life, proſperity, and advantage of the inner-man, the moſt Noble and excellent part of man. And indeed, what we have been ſpeaking of afflictions, and of the profit and advantage of them, is to be underſtood, as with reſpect to the ſoul and inner-man eſpecially: but having ſpoken ſo largely of them before, I ſhall add no more thereto. But we may ſay, he will now *juſtify* them freely by his grace, through the redemption

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that is in Chriſt Jeſus, *Rom.* 3. 22, 25. And he will *pour out his ſpirit* unto the truely pious perſons; and thereby make *their ſouls like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters fail not*; which will ſpring up unto everlaſting life, *Iſa.* 58. 6, 11. *How much more*, ſaith our Saviour, *ſhall your heavenly father give the holy ſpirit to them that ask him?* Luk. 11. 13. But this is to be underſtood of the *firſt-fruits* thereof; the *Harveſt* thereof is ſtill to be waited for: as the Apoſtle ſaith; *we our ſelves alſo, which have the firſt-fruits of the ſpirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the adoption*, &c. Rom. 8. 23, 25. Even as before the children of *Iſrael* came into the Land of *Canaan*, they had a *firſt-fruits*, as it were, of that excellent land, which was the glory of all lands, brought unto them in the *wilderneſs*, for their encouragement to hold on their way; and that from thence they might conceive and conclude, that the land of *Canaan* was a moſt excellent countrey, *Numb.* 13. 23, 24, 26, 27. So now, while they are in the wilderneſs of this world, God doth in ſome beginnings, and in a ſmall meaſure, give unto them that live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, a Taſte of what they ſhall hereafter compleatly and fully enjoy; that they might *Hunger and Thirſt after righteouſneſs*;

ouſneſs; and preſs toward the mark, for the prize which is ſet before them. He is now *merciful to their unrighteouſneſs,* Heb. 8. 12. And doth remember them with his ſpecial favour, *Pſal.* 106. 4. Prov. 8. 17. And gives them *grace for ſeaſonable help,* Pſal. 84. 11. Heb. 4. 16. And is *filling them with the fruits of righteouſneſs,* which are by Jeſus Chriſt to the praiſe and glory of God, *Iſa.* 61. 3. *Joh.* 15. 1, 8. In *taking Chriſt's yoke* upon them, and learning of him, *they ſhall find reſt to their ſouls*; while they meet with various afflictions, and occaſions of ſadneſs, as with reſpect to the outward man: *their ſoul ſhall dwell at eaſe,* and lodge in Goodneſs, *Mat.* 11. 28, 30. *Pſal.* 25. 11, 14. God is now filling them with joy and peace in believing, in the midſt of all the troubles and exerciſes, wherewith they are exerciſed: and is alſo effecting in them, and quickning them unto a lively Hope, and well-grounded Expectation, which maketh not aſhamed, of the Harveſt and future inheritance: and this *Hope* they have *as an Anchor of the Soul,* both *ſure*; (that which will not break; how highly ſoever the waves lift up their voice; or how fiercely ſoever the winds bluſter and blow, yet this *Hope* will hold firm:) and *it is ſtedfaſt*; (it will not ſlip, for it is centred in Chriſt, that *Rock of A-*

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ges, againſt which *the gates of hell ſhall not prevail*; nor againſt thoſe that firmely abide in him.) Yea this *Hope*, which is the Anchor of the Soul, *entreth into that within the veil*; *whither the fore-runner is for us entred, even Jeſus, made an High-prieſt for ever, after the order of* Melchiſedech, Heb. 6. 18, 20. 1 Joh. 3. 1, 2, 3. But we ſhall here add no more as to this firſt particular; in which the Apoſtle doth evince and evidence to us, the great advantageouſneſs and profitableneſs of true piety, holineſs, and righteouſneſs; to the end we may ſeriouſly and ſtedfaſtly exerciſe our ſelves, to the unfeigned belief of the myſtery of it; and alſo to the ſincere practice of it; in ſaying unto us, *having promiſe of the life that now is.* And now, God willing, we ſhall proceed on unto *the ſecond*, contained in the laſt clauſe: namely,

2. *Godlineſs is profitable, having promiſe alſo of the life that is to come:* to wit, after this uncertain and frail life ſhall have an end. In which is intimated to us, that though men lead never ſuch pious and good lives; though they walk never ſo holily, juſtly, and unblamably, in having their converſation as becomes and adornes the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus: yet they ſhall not live here always; but they muſt depart this life as well

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as other men. *It is appointed to men* generally *once to dye*, to dye the *first* death, *Heb.* 9. 27. *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death? and ſhall he deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave?* Pſal. 89. 48. Nor indeed would it be good for them, to live here always in this polluted, evil, troubleſome, and dangerous world: for while they are at *home in the body, they are abſent from the Lord:* but when this life is at end, they ſhall then *be with Chriſt*, and ſhall *enter into the joy of their Lord.* And therefore, as the preſent *life is theirs*, while it is continued to them; ſo *death is theirs* alſo; to *them to dye is gain: the day of death is better to them, than the day of their birth*, Eccl. 7. 1. To which I ſhall at this time enlarge no further.

But though they alſo muſt needs dye, and depart out of this world, yet in unfeignedly exerciſing themſelves to *Godlineſs*, they have *the promiſe of the life that is to come.* As *things preſent are theirs*, ſo alſo *are things to come. All things are theirs, and they are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's*, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. If in (or for) this life onely, they have hope in Chriſt, they are of all men moſt miſerable, as, 1 *Cor.* 15. 19. But they have the promiſe and aſſurance of a future and better

life; and are *begotten again to the lively hope of it.*

But now, in ſpeaking unto this laſt clauſe, I ſhall deſire ſo to do in this following order. That is to ſay:

1. *Evidence*; and ſhew, that there is a future life, *a life to come*, when this preſent, ſhort, and frail life is ended.

2. What is *meant* by, and *contained* in the life to come.

3. That Godlineſs hath the *promiſe* thereof.

1. I Say, we ſhall give ſome *evidences*; and ſhew, that there *is a future ſtate to be entred upon*; another life beſides this preſent, *a life to come*, when this frail, vain, and Tranſitory life is ended and expired: and this may appear, and be evidenced, in theſe following evidences: namely,

1. From plain *intimations*, and *expreſſions*, which are contained in *the Scriptures of Truth.* This was more darkly ſignified and made known in the holy Scriptures, written before the coming of our Lord Jeſus in the Fleſh. Thus thoſe words ſpoken unto *Moſes* by God in the buſh, to wit, *I am the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, Exod. 3. 6. are made uſe of by our bleſſed Saviour, to prove *a future ſtate* after this life: *For*, ſaith he, *God is not the God*

God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. Theſe *Patriarchs*, though they are dead unto us, yet they live unto him: and ſhall be raiſed again in due ſeaſon, *Mat.* 22. 31, 32. Mark. 12. 26, 27. Luk. 20. 37, 38 Thus alſo, whereas the Prophet ſaith, *he will ſwallow up death in victory: and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces*, &c. The Apoſtle *Paul* proving the Reſurrection of the dead; and particularly ſaying, *this corruptible muſt put on incorruption; and this mortal muſt put on immortality*, &c. He then addes the former part of that Prophecy before cited; to wit, *Then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in victory.* And the latter clauſe of the Prophet's forementioned, is cited by the Apoſtle *John*, when he ſpeaks of the *future ſtate* of ſuch, as were truly Godly perſons, *Iſa.* 25. 8. with 1 *Cor.* 15. 53. 54. and *Rev.* 7. 14, 17. and chap. 21. 4. That Prophecy alſo of the prophet *Hoſea's*, to wit, *O death, I will be thy plagues; O Grave, I will be thy deſtruction:* The Apoſtle doth cite, when he treats of, and proves the reſurrection, *Hoſ.* 13. 14. with 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. Thus alſo when the Prophet *Iſaiah* is ſpeaking of the removal of the righteous out of this world by death, ſaying, *The righteous periſheth,——— And merciful men are taken away, none conſide-*

ring that the righteous is taken from that which is evil: he then immediately ſignifieth, that there is not then an utter end of them; or that for ever they ceaſe to be: but he very plainly gives us to underſtand, that they enter upon a better ſtate, when they are hence departed: for he immediately ſubjoynes to the former; *He ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs*; or *before him*, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. And the Prophet *Daniel* doth very plainly and perſpicuouſly ſpeak of a future ſtate, to be entred upon by both good and bad, when they by death are paſſed out of this world: for he thus prophetically ſpeaks, ſaying, *Many of them that ſleep in the duſt of the earth ſhall awake; ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame and everlaſting contempt.* And by the word [*many*] there, we may well underſtand [all] or *the multitude:* for it doth ſo ſignify in other places of Scripture, *Dan.* 12. 2. with *Rom.* 5. 15, 19. with verſ. 18. *Pſal.* 32. 10. &c.

And though the life to come, or future ſtate, was more darkly diſcovered, or leſs clearly revealed, then it is ſince Chriſt came a light into the world; yet it was then ſo plainly made known, that the holy ones in the Church of *Iſrael* did firmly believe, and confidently expect a better life, when they

they ſhould depart out of this: and the faith and hope thereof, made them willing to forgo the deſirable things of this preſent life and world; and to undergo afflictions, perſecutions, and torments, yea and death it ſelf, for the name of God, *Heb.* 11. 13, 16, 24, 26. And ſo it is ſaid, *Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance* (to wit, upon their enemies Termes) *That they might obtain a better Reſurrection. And others had trial of cruell Mockings, and Scourgings; yea more-over, of Bonds and Impriſonments*, &c. Heb. 11. 35, 36, 40. Yea it appears, that not only the truly pious ones in that Church did thus believe and confeſs; But it was the general belief of all among the *Jews*, (the Sect of the *Sadduces* excepted) *Mark.* 12. 18, 27, 37. *Matth.* 22. 23, 33. And particularly of the *Phariſees* it is ſaid, *They confeſs a Reſurrection, and Angels, and Spirits*, *Act.* 23. 6, 8, 9. See alſo, *John* 11. 24. *Act.* 24. 14, 15, 16. and *chap.* 26. 6, 7, 8.

But that there is a *Future State* to be entred upon by All, when this Tranſitory and Momentany State ſhall be ended and determined; is much more clearly revealed and evidently diſcovered to us, in the Holy Scriptures, written ſince the coming and appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *who hath aboliſhed death, and brought Life and Immortali-*

ty to Light by the Goſpel, 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. with *Mat.* 22. 24, 30. How plainly was this declared by our Lord Jeſus himſelf, while he was upon the Earth? *When*, ſaith he, *the Son of Man ſhall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him; Then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory; and before him ſhall be gathered all Nations: And he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goates*, Matth. 25. 30, 32, 41, 46. And again our Lord ſaith unto the *Jews: Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in which all that are in their Graves, ſhall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and ſhall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of Life; and they that have done evil, unto the Reſurrection of Damnation*, John 5. 27, 29. Once more he ſaith, *I came down from Heaven, not to do mine Own Will, but the Will of him that ſent me. And this is the Will of him that ſent me, That of all which he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up at the laſt day. And this is the Will of him that ſent me, That every one that ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlaſting Life: And I will raiſe him up at the laſt day*, John 6. 38, 39, 40. and *Chap.* 11. 25. And the holy Apoſtles, after the Holy Spirit was received by them in that moſt plentiful effuſion of

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it, mentioned in *Act.* 2. did very frequently, and moſt clearly, *Preach through Jeſus, the Reſurrection from the dead, Act.* 4. 2. and *chap.* 10. 42, 43. And particularly, the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaketh thus of his Faith and Hope; *After the way which they call Hereſy, ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers; Believing all things which are written in the Law, and the Prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themſelves alſo allow; That there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, both of the Juſt, and of the Unjuſt,* Act. 24. 14, 15, 16. And indeed, to this end Chriſt both Died, and Roſe, and Revived, that he might be *Lord both of the Dead and living.*——*For it is written, As I live,* ſaith the Lord, *every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to God. So then every one of us ſhall give an Account of himſelf to God,* Rom. 14. 9, 11, 12. with *Phil.* 2. 9, 11. And in 1 *Cor.* 15. the ſame Apoſtle doth very largely aſſert and evidence, by manifold Arguments, that all ſhall be raiſed again in due ſeaſon: And particularly in *ver.* 21, 22. he ſaith; *For ſince by man came Death, by man came alſo the Reſurrection of the Dead. For as in* Adam *all dye, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive. But every man in his own order.* See alſo, *Rev.* 20. To this I might further have enlarged; but what hath been written doth ſufficiently

ſufficiently evince, that the Scriptures, do very fully and plainly aſſure us, that there is a *Life to come*; a future State to be entred upon by all, when this ſhort and frail ſtate is ended. And I ſhall here only add, that this is a very conſiderable, momentous, and weighty Evidence of the Truth hereof; *For the Scriptures cannot be broken. And it is eaſier for Heaven and Earth to paſs, than one tittle of the Law to faile*, Luke 16. 17. And when the *Rich man* in the Parable ſaid unto *Abraham, I pray thee therefore Father, that thou wouldeſt ſend* Lazarus *to my Fathers Houſe; for I have five Brethren, that he may teſtify unto them, leſt they alſo come unto this place of Torment.* Abraham *then ſaith unto him, They have* Moſes, *and the Prophets, let them hear them.* (Intimating plainly, that they gave ſufficient notice of a future State; that thoſe that heard them might avoid that diſmal place of Torment, *Pſal.* 9. 17. and 49. 14, 15.) *And he ſaid, nay Father* Abraham; *But if one went unto them from the dead, they will Repent. And he ſaid unto him, If they hear not* Moſes *and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded though one roſe from the dead.* (And the ſame may be more fully affirmed concerning them, that will not believe our Lord Jeſus, and his holy Apoſtles) *Luke* 16. 27, 29, 31.

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with *Heb.* 2. 1, 3. and *chap.* 10. 28, 29, 31. and *chap.* 12. 18, 25, 29. And ſo much for that firſt and moſt material evidence.

2. That there is *a Life to come*, a future State to be entred upon, when this preſent Frail one is ended, is evidenced alſo by ſome *Inſtances* of the Truth hereof, which are mentioned in the Holy Scriptures: Thus it is ſaid of *Enoch*, That *He walked with God, and he was not: For God took him.* Or as the Apoſtle ſaith, *By Faith* Enoch *was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death; and was not found, becauſe God tranſlated him*, (to wit, from Earth to Heaven:) *for before his Tranſlation he had this Teſtimony, that he pleaſed God. But without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him.* Now if there be not a future State to be entred upon, when this preſent one is ended; and a better Life to be enjoyed, by ſuch as pleaſe God, when they depart out of this, then *Enoch* had fared the worſe for his very ſignal and eminent Holineſs: For he was the ſhorteſt liver in this World by far, of any of them mentioned in *Gen.* 5. And doubleſs, God removed him to a far better place and ſtate, to give aſſurance to others, that *He is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* And this *Inſtance* of a future Bleſſed State was the more conſiderable, before the Scriptures were

were written, that the World might know that it is no vain thing to ſerve and pleaſe the Lord, *Gen.* 5. 22, 24. with *Heb.* 11. 5, 6. And as the Son of *Sirach* ſaith, *Enoch pleaſed the Lord God, therefore was he tranſlated for an enſample of Repentance to the Generations*, Ecclus 44. 16. And again, *Upon the Earth was no man created like* Enoch: *for he was taken up from the Earth*, chap. 49. 14. Thus it is alſo ſaid of *Elijah*, *There appeared a Chariot of fire, and Horſes of fire, and parted* Eliſha *and him aſunder*; *and* Elijah *went up by a whirl-wind into Heaven, and* Eliſha *ſaw it, and he cryed, My Father, my Father*, &c. 2 *King.* 2. 9, 11, 12. And many hundred of years after this, even when our Lord Jeſus was upon the Earth, *Moſes* and *Elias* were with him, when he was tranſfigured: As it is ſaid, *Behold, there talked with Chriſt, two men, which were* Moſes *and* Elias; *who appeared in Glory, and ſpake of his deceaſe which he ſhould accompliſh at* Jeruſalem. And *Peter, James* and *John*, a competent number of credible Witneſſes, *Saw the two men that ſtood with our Lord.* And *Peter* ſaid unto Jeſus, *Maſter, it is good for us to be here*, (or as ſome, *that we Remain here*) *And let us make three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for* Moſes, *and one for* Elias, &c. *Luk.* 9. 30, 31, 32, 33. Our *Lord* alſo, who was not in Appea-

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rance only, but really dead, *John* 19. 33, 34. And who continued untill the third day in the Grave, was then *Raiſed again* from the Dead, in that very individual Body in which he was Crucified, Dead and Buried, *Luk.* 24. 38,40. *John* 20. And unto his holy Apoſtles, *He ſhewed himſelf alive after his paſſion, by many infallible proofs, being ſeen of them forty dayes, and ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*, *Act.* 1. 3. Yea, he was not only ſeen of his Apoſtles, but alſo of above *five hundred Brethren at once*, 1 Cor. 15. 6. And after his Reſurrection, and after his Remaining forty dayes upon the Earth, *While his Apoſtles beheld, he was taken up*, to wit, *into Heaven.* And unto his Diſciples two Angels ſaid, *Ye men of* Galilee, *why ſtand ye gazing up into Heaven? This ſame Jeſus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come in like manner, as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven*, Act. 1. 9, 10, 11. And ſome conſiderable time after this, the Holy Man, and Martyr, *Stephen* ſaw him in Heaven: For it is ſaid, *He being full of the Holy Ghoſt, looked up ſtedfaſtly into Heaven, and ſaw the Glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right hand of God; and ſaid, Behold, I ſee the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man ſtanding on the right hand of God.* And this good confeſſion he witneſſed before thoſe, *Who gnaſhed*

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on him with their Teeth; and preſently after *ſtoned him*, *Act.* 7. 54, 55, 56, 59. And after this again, the Lord Jeſus *Appeared unto Saul* in the way, *Act.* 9. 15. and was *ſeen* by him: Hence he ſaith, *Am I not an Apoſtle?——Have I not ſeen Jeſus Chriſt our Lord?* 1 Cor. 9. 1. And ſaith he, *Laſt of all he was ſeen of me alſo, as of one born out of due time*, 1 Cor. 15. 8. Act. 22. 8, 14, 15. and *chap.* 26. 11, 16. And himſelf, by his Angel, thus ſpeaketh unto St. *John*, ſaying, *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore*, Amen. This is a true and *Faithful ſaying*, And *therefore worthy of all acceptation*, Rev. 1. 18. and *chap.* 2. 8. So that we have full aſſurance, and infallible proof given us, of the Reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and of his enjoyment of an everlaſting and endleſs Life in the nature of man, *Heb.* 7. 16, 17.

And this *Inſtance* is the moſt *Conſiderable* of all; becauſe he died and roſe as a *Publick Man*, as the *laſt Adam*. *He by the grace of God taſted death for every man: And roſe again for their juſtification:* and is become the *Reſurrection and the Life*, John 11. 25. He is a *quickning Spirit*; In and by whom *All ſhall be made Alive*, after they are dead, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. with *ver.* 21, 22. And the very *end* of his dying and riſing, and reviving

reviving, was, that he might *Lord it over quick and dead*; and be *Judge of all*, *Rom.* 14. 9, 12. And ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, *God now commandeth all men, every where, to Repent: Becauſe he hath appointed a day, in which he will Judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men in that he hath raiſed him from the dead*, *Act.* 17. 30, 31. 1 *Cor.* 15. 20, 22. and *chap.* 6. 14. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 13, 18.

And preſently after the Reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus from the dead, many other Holy Ones were raiſed: As it is ſaid, *And the Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints, which ſlept, aroſe, and came out of the Graves, after his Reſurrection; and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many*, Mat. 27. 52, 53. which might be ſome firſt-fruits of fulfilling of that Propheſie of *Eſaias*, where he ſaith, *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead Body ſhall they ariſe*, &c. *Iſa.* 26. 19.

And Laſtly, our Saviour in the Parable, or Story, of the *Rich Man*, and of *Lazarus*, doth plainly give us to underſtand; that when they departed out of this Life and World, they then entered upon another State; the one of Joy and Comfort, and the other of Miſery and Torment: for it is ſaid, *The beggar died, and was carryed by the Angels into Abra-*

Abraham's Boſome. The Rich Man alſo died, and was Buried. And in Hell he lift up his eyes, being in Torments, and ſeeth Abraham afarr of, and Lazarus in his Boſome.——— And ſaid, Father Abraham *have mercy upon me; and ſend* Lazarus, *that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am Tormented in this Flame. But* Abraham *ſaid, Son, Remember that thou, in thy life-time, receiv'ſt thy good things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *evil things: but now he is Comforted, and thou art Tormented.* In which alſo is plainly ſignified to us, that *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, was then alive in his Spirit; and did live unto God; as our Saviour alſo elſe-where affirmeth, *Luk.* 16. 19, 22, 24, 25. and *chap.* 20. 38. And the Apoſtle *John* ſaith, *I ſaw under the Altar, the Souls of them that were ſlain for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony which they held. And they cryed with a loud voice, ſaying, How long O Lord, Holy and True, doſt thou not Judge and Avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the earth,* &c. *Rev.* 6. 9, 10, 11. and *chap.* 7. 14, 15, 17. But I ſhall enlarge no farther unto that *Second Evidence* of a Future State, and Life to come; but proceed unto the *Third*, to wit:

3. The Truth of the former is further *Evidenced*, by the *Deſire* and Vote of Pious and Serious Perſons to be removed

out

out of this World. I do not mean, or ſpeak concerning the Deſire or Prayers of ſome good men in a Paſſion, or Diſtemper: ſuch an one it may ſeem, *Elijah* was in, when *Jezebel* vowed to take away his Life: for then he requeſted for himſelf that he might Dye, and ſaid; *It is enough O Lord, take away my Life: for I am not better than my Fathers,* 1 King. 19. 1, 4. with *Jam.* 5. 17. So alſo when *Jonah* ſaw that God ſpared *Nineveh,* upon their ſerious Repentance; *It diſpleaſed him exceedingly, and he was very angry:* ——*And ſaid, Take, I beſeech thee, my life from me; For it is better for me to dye, than to live.* And again, *when his Gourd withered;* ——*And the Sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted;* He wiſhed in himſelf to dye, *and ſaid, It is better for me to dye, than to live. And God ſaid unto Jonah, doeſt thou well to be angry for the Gourd? and he ſaid, I do well to be angry, even unto Death,* Jonah 4. 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9. Job 6. 8, 9, 10. and 14. 13. with *chap.* 36. 20, 21.

But I ſpeak concerning the Vote and Deſire of Good men, when they were in a good calme, compoſed frame and temper of Spirit. So that Good and Holy man *Simeon,* when he had ſeen our Lord Jeſus, and taken him into his Armes; He then bleſſed God, and ſaid: Lord, *Now letteſt thou thy*

ſervant depart in Peace, according to thy word, &c. Luk. 2. 26, 28, 29, 30. And *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, and of other unfeigned Believers: *Our ſelves which have the firſt-fruits of the ſpirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of the Body,* Rom. 8. 23. And again he ſaith, *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an houſe not made with hands Eternal in the Heavens: for in this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon, with our houſe which is from Heaven.——For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortallity might be ſwallowed up of Life.——We are confident, and willing, rather to be abſent from the Body, and to be preſent with the Lord,* 2 *Cor.* 4. 16, 18. and *chap.* 5. 1, 2, 4. 8. And the ſame Holy Apoſtle, as with Reſpect to himſelf, ſaith, *I am in a ſtraight betwixt two, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better, Phil.* 1. 20, 23. And of the Patriarchs and Holy Ones, in former times, it is ſaid, *If they had been mindful of that Countrey from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have return'd: But now they deſire a better Countrey, that is, an Heavenly: wherefore God is not aſham'd*

to

to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a City, Heb. 11. 9, 10, 13, 16. *Gen.* 49. 18.

And theſe Holy Ones who thus Deſired, were not *Novices* in the Faith, but Eminent ones therein: they were *Pillars* in the Church, as it were; or however, ſome of them were ſo; *Patriarchs*, *Prophets*, and *Apoſtles*; and ſo, ſuch as were guided by the Holy and Eternal Spirit of God, *which ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.* And by which Bleſſed and infallible Spirit they were aſſured, that there was a future ſtate, to be entred upon, when they are departed out of this Evil and paſſing world, and ſo Faile from among the Children of men; or otherwiſe, it was not at all deſirable to go out of this Life and World: For *not to be*, is next unto, and little better than, *to be miſerable*, as our Saviour ſeems to ſignifie to us in *Matth.* 26. 24. *Mark* 14. 21. And alſo by this good and moſt *Underſtanding Spirit*, they were perſwaded to Believe, that the future State that good men ſhall enter upon, when they are departed out of this World, is far better, and much rather to be choſen, then that they were then upon, while they were in this Frail, Mortal, and Corruptible Body: as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *To me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is Gain, Phil.* 1. 20, 21. And ſo particularly it is ſaid of that Pious man *Si-*

meon, fore-named, who desired to depart out of, and leave this World and Life, when he had *seen God's Salvation, which he had prepared before the face of all People; that the holy Ghost was upon him, and it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see Death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple*, &c. *Luk.* 2. 25, 26, 29. And when the Apostle *Paul* expresseth the hearty desire of himself, and of other believers, (which we have given some account of, and mentioned before;) *not that they might be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortality might be swallowed up of life. He then immediately subjoyns thereto; now he that hath wrought us for this self-same thing, is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.--- We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 4, 6, 8. But what we have been discoursing of, may suffice as to that *third Evidence*: And now proceed we unto a fourth: namely,

4. That *there will be a future state to be* entered upon, when this present short state is expired, appears to be most *Reasonable*; and *enlightned Reason* it self may convince us of the Truth and

and certainty thereof: for when, or how otherwiſe can there be a clear and full *Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God*; who hath very clearly and plentifully aſſured us, in his word of Truth, *That he will render unto every man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 5, 6. That *he will bring every work into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be Evil, Eccleſ.* 12. 13, 14. *Shall he not render to every man according to his works? Prov.* 24. 12. *Pſal.* 62. 12. Now if there were not a Life to come, after this preſent momentany one is ended; when ſhall many wicked Perſons receive the due and deſerved reward of their ungodly and unrighteous Deeds? And when ſhall the truly Pious and Righteous ones, be made partakers of the gracious recompence of their reward? If there be not a future ſtate to be entred upon, and an account hereafter to be given unto God, many wicked perſons would appear to be in the beſt and moſt deſirable condition, and ſo abide without any remarkable change or alteration, all the days of this vain ſhort life: and many of the beſt and moſt Godly perſons, would appear to be in the worſt condition, becauſe they meet with ſo much Reproach, Adverſity and Affliction in this world: as our Saviour hath fore-told, ſaying, *In the World ye ſhall have tribulation*, Joh. 16. 33. Con-

cerning the Proſperity and Flouriſhing eſtate, of Evil and Ungodly Perſons, *Job* ſpeaks very fully, unto his miſtaken friends, ſaying, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in Power? their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight with them, and their off-ſpring before their eyes. Their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the Rod of God upon them. Their Bull gendreth, and faileth not; their Cow Calveth, and caſteth not her Calf. They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their Children dance. They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ: they ſpend their days in Wealth, (or in Mirth;) and in a moment go down into the grave.* This was the obſervation of that perfect and upright man *Job*, concerning the un-interrupted proſperity and fulneſs of ſome wicked Perſons in his time; and yet he had not the Advantage of the Holy Scriptures as we have. But notwithſtanding all this; though they did ſo proſper and rejoyce in this world; yet nevertheleſs, He looked upon them to be really in a very bad and ſad condition; becauſe he believed, that there would be a future Judgment, and then they would be rewarded according to their deeds and demerits: for in the following part of the Chapter before-referred to, he ſaith; *Have ye not aſked them that goe by the way? And do ye not know their tokens? That the wicked*

ed (notwithſtanding all his preſent fulneſs and admirable proſperiry in this world) *is reſerved unto the day of deſtruction? they ſhall be brought forth (out of their graves) to the day of wrath*, Job 21. 5, 6, 13, 29, 30. *Pſal.* 73. 3, 11, 12, 17, 20. *O Lord how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutiſh man knoweth not, neither doth a fool underſtand this; when the wicked ſpring as graſs, and when all the workers of Iniquity do flouriſh; it is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever*, *Pſal.* 92. 5, 6, 7. and 37. 1, 2, 35, 36, 38.

And ſo, on the other hand, many righteous ones do now meet with many troubles and afflictions in this world; as it is written, *For thy ſake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter*, Rom. 8. 36. They do paſs through much Tribulation and exerciſe in this preſent ſtate; and many times Drink of the Cup of ſorrow and grief: but without all doubt, there will be another and better reward for the righteous; becauſe *the righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 11. 7. *Then* (to wit, hereafter) *ye ſhall return, and diſcern between the righteous, and the wicked; between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not; for behold, the day cometh that ſhall burn as an oven; and*

all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, ſhall be ſtubble : and the day that cometh ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of hoſts; that it ſhall leave them neither Root, nor Branch; but unto you that fear my name, ſhall the Sun of righteouſneſs ariſe with healing in his wings, &c. Mal. 3. 17, 18. and ch. 4. 1, 2, 3. And if it ſhould not thus be, how ſhould God judge the world in righteouſneſs? when the wiſeſt of mere men, to wit, *Solomon*, ſaith; *And more-over, I ſaw under the Sun the place of judgment, that wickedneſs was there; and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there :* He then makes this rational concluſion, or deduction there-from, to wit; *I ſaid in mine heart, God ſhall judge the righteous, and the wicked: for there is a time, there* (to wit, in the world to come) *for every purpoſe, and for every work.* And then the evil and unrighteous perſons, who have judged, or acted unjuſtly, againſt the upright and innocent, ſhall be called to an account, and juſtly condemned for ſo doing; how high ſoever they have been in Power or Authority here: and the righteous ſhall be acquitted, and righted by him, who executeth judgment, for all that are oppreſſed, *Eccleſ.* 3. 16, 17. with *Job* 34. 10, 11, 12. God's righteouſneſs is engaged, to render unto all men, according to their

their works and doings; and therefore, becauſe he doth not do ſo fully now in this day, and world, we may ſafely and certainly conclude, that he will do ſo in the world to come, *Rom.* 2. 5, 6, 7, 10, 11. *Seeing that it is a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you: and to you who are troubled, reſt with us, when the Lord ſhall be revealed from heaven, with the Angels of his power; in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe, in that day,* 2 Theſ. 1. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10. 1 Cor. 15. 19, 32. 2 Pet. 2. 9, 10.

5. And laſtly, as to this matter; another *evidence* to evince, that there is *a life to come*; another ſtate to be entred upon, when this is ended and expired: as alſo to aſſure and confirm the truth of the foregoing, and laſt mentioned evidence, is this; that even the *Gentiles*, or ſuch as were without the pale of the Church, and ſo ſuch as had not the advantage and inſtruction of the holy Scriptures, *had*, (that notwithſtanding) *ſome dark and obſcure apprehenſions and knowledge of a future*

future ſtate to be entred upon, when this frail and Temporary ſtate was ended; *even by the light of nature:* or however, ſome of them had ſo; as is clearly intimated to us, and ſignified in the Scriptures of truth. Thus it plainly appears in *Job*, and in the ſayings of ſome of his friends, in thoſe obſcure times in which he lived. *Oh*, ſaith Job, *that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an Iron pen, and laid in the rock for ever! for I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, wormes deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God: whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another, though my reins be conſumed within me*, Job 19. 23, 24, 25, 27. And as he very fully and clearly (all things conſidered) declares his faith and knowledge, concerning his Redeemer, and the bleſſed ſtate he ſhould enjoy, after his body, and skin, and reins were deſtroyed, and conſumed: ſo alſo elſe-where he very plainly ſpeaks of a future, ſenſible being of evil and wicked perſons, after their removal out of this world; in the words which we have mentioned before upon another account, namely: *Do ye not know their Tokens? That the wicked is reſerved to*

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the day of deſtruction? they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath. Even ſuch wicked ones alſo ſhall be brought forth to the day of wraths; as of whom he had ſaid, but a little before, *They ſpend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave,* Job 21. 29, 30. with *verſ.* 13. And *Elihu* alſo ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe, ſaying; *Far be it from the Almighty, that he ſhould commit iniquity; for the work of a man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every man to find according to his ways.* And again to the ſame purpoſe he ſaith; *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings. There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves,* Job 34. 10, 12, 21, 23. with *Rom.* 2. 5, 6. So *Balaam,* who was an Heathen, and lived in *Aram,* or *Syria,* neer the river *Euphrates,* Numb. 23. 7. and *chap.* 22. 5. he very plainly ſignifies, that there ſhall be a future ſtate to be entred upon, by both good and bad: and that the condition of good men, would be excellently deſirable: and therefore he thus breaths out his vote and deſire, *Let me dye the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end,* or *reward, be like his.* Plainly ſignifying to us thereby, that he did believe, that the end, or reward of the righteous, would be better, and more to be deſired, than that

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of the wicked: and yet alſo, that both ſhould dye, and after that be rewarded, according to their ſeveral deeds, *Numb.* 23. 10. And it is ſaid concerning *Felix*, who was governour of a *Province* under the *Roman* Emperour, that as *Paul reaſoned*, in his hearing, *of the Faith in Chriſt*; and therein particularly, of *Righteouſneſs, Temperance, and the Judgment to come*; Felix *trembled.* In which is plainly intimated, that he did believe, what was declared unto him by the Apoſtle, concerning the *future judgment*, though he was an heathen; and his guilty conſcience, at the hearing thereof, put him into an uneaſy trembling condition, becauſe that day of judgment, will be the Perdition of ungodly and unrighteous men; and ſuch an one it may ſeem he was, *Act.* 24. 24, 25. with *Jam.* 2. 19. *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. And ſo, it may ſeem, though the *Epicurean Philoſophers*, who denyed all *Providence*, and any *future ſtate*, and counted the delights and pleaſures of this life, their chiefeſt good; and therefore might oppoſe the notion of a life and *judgment to come*: Though they, I ſay, mocked at the *Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the dead*; Yet others at *Athens* were more ſerious at the hearing of it, and ſaid; *We will hear thee again of this matter*; and *certain perſons there clave unto the*

Apoſtle

Apoſtle, Act. 17. 31, 34. with verſ. 18. And though we might have enlarged hereto, yet what hath been diſcourſed of, may ſufficiently evidence unto us, and aſſure us of this hugely weighty and important truth, namely, That *there is a life and world to come*, when this preſent life and world is ended and expired. And therefore I ſhall, at this preſent however, adde no more to the proof and evidence thereof.

Onely, by way of *Inference* from what hath been ſaid on this Subject, I may briefly ſay, that the ſerious conſideration of the certainty of a future ſtate, is very uſeful, proper, and cogent, to provoke us all, ſo to live in this world, as thoſe that know, we muſt hereafter give an account of our ſelves, and of our actions, unto God, the judge of all the earth; and then we muſt receive a juſt recompence of reward, ſutable to our former works and doings: O then! how doth it behoove and concern us all to *receive*, and hold faſt *grace*, that we may ſerve God acceptably, with reverence and Godly fear: *For our God is a conſuming fire*, Heb. 12. 28, 29. Our Lord Jeſus now calls upon all, in this day of his Grace and Patience, ſaying; *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth*; *For I am God*, a juſt God, and a Saviour, *And there is none elſe*. And to enforce

force his call and command, and engage all to answer and obey it, therefore this is added to the former; *I have sworn by my self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every Knee shall bow, every Tongue shall swear; surely shall one say; in the Lord is righteousness and strength. Even unto him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of* Israel *be justified, and shall glory.* Let us then give diligence, while the day of grace is lengthned out, and continued to us, that we so receive the grace of God to purpose, as to fear him, and keep his commandements; for this is *the whole of man*; his whole duty, excellency, and interest, that it may be well with us in the life to come. And it is worthy our serious consideration, and observation, that when the Apostle *Paul*, referrs to that forementioned prophecy of *Isaiah*, in which he fore-declares and propheſies of the future judgment, in which *every knee shall bow to our Lord Jesus, and every Tongue shall confess him Lord, to the glory of God the Father:* He then gives such like exhortation, as is before-mentioned, to the believers, saying; *Wherefore, my beloved;——work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will, and*

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to do, of good pleaſure. Do all things without murmuring, and diſputings: that ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs:——That I may rejoyce in the day of Chriſt, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain, Iſa. 45. 22, 23. 24, 25. with Phil. 2. 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16.

And as this Holy Apoſtle, gives ſuch like counſel to the Believers, unto whom he writes; ſo he alſo ſet before them an Imitable example, by his own practice, that they might be followers of him: *I have hope toward God,* ſaith he, *that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the dead, both of the juſt, and of the unjuſt. And herein do I exerciſe my ſelf, to have alwayes a conſcience void of offence toward God, and toward Men,* Act. 24. 14, 16. And again he ſaith of himſelf, and of other hearty Believers; *We labour, that whether preſent, or abſent; we may be accepted of him. For we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may Receive the things done in his own Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or bad; knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we perſwade Men,* &c. 2 *Cor.* 5. 9, 10, 11. *Eccl.* 12. 13, 14. *Luke* 21. 34, 35, 36. But we ſhall enlarge no further unto this particular, but proceed on to what remains, to wit;

2. We come in the next place to enquire and

and consider, what is meant by, and contained in, *The Life to come*, which is mentioned in the Text; now we may premise this, before we come to speak more distinctly hereto: That though in the Evidences beforementioned, we have spoken of the *future state* indistinctly, and in a general consideration: Yet here, in the place we are discoursing of, and from, by *the Life to come*; we are to understand, that blessed and happy Estate they shall enter into hereafter, who do now exercise themselves, to sincere Godliness, and unfeigned Obedience. And so much is plainly intimated to us in the words themselves, to wit, *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise——of the Life that is to come.* Without all peradventure, that which is promised, and which is promised unto *Godliness*, and unto them that heartily exercise themselves thereto, must needs be (as is there also said) Profitable, and highly desirable and valuable.

As also we may premise this, that I shall not here distinctly discourse of that *Intermediate State*, which the Spirits of Righteous Men made perfect are in, between the Death and Resurrection of the Body; but of that which they shall enter upon, and perfectly enjoy in, and after the Resurrection of their proper Bodies.

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Now having very briefly premiſed theſe two things; we may ſay in general, that by *the Life to come*, here mentioned, we are to underſtand, a full and compleat deliverance from all, that is evil and afflictive; and a perfect, glorious, and everlaſting enjoyment and fruition, of all that Good and Bliſs, which they ſhall be made capable of. And as on the one hand, *Death* comprehends all that Miſery, Curſe, and woful Puniſhment, which is the due and deſerved reward of Mens Trangreſſion and Diſobedience.

Thus the Lord at the beginning threatned our firſt Parent, *Adam*, ſaying, *In the day thou eateſt of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Thou ſhalt dye the Death*; Thou ſhalt ſurely dye, *Gen.* 2. 17. and ſo the Apoſtle ſaith, *The wages of Sin is Death*: to wit, all Miſery and Affliction, *Rom.* 6. 23. and that eternal and diſmal Torment and Deſtruction, wherewith they ſhall be puniſhed and tormented, who know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of our Lord and Saviour, is called, *The ſecond Death*, *Rev.* 2 11. and *chap.* 20. 6. So on the other Hand, all that Glory and Happineſs which is aſſured unto, and ſhall hereafter be enjoyed by them that exerciſe themſelves unto, and perſevere in well doing, is called *Life*, and *Eternal*

Life; and here, *The Life that is to come.* So alſo it is ſaid, *This is the Record, that God hath given unto us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life:*——*Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know, that ye have eternal Life*, 1 Joh. 5, 11, 12, 13. And concerning both the puniſhment of ſin, and the gracious Reward of Piety, the Apoſtle ſaith, *The wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is eternal Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*: As in like expreſſions alſo, *Moſes* had ſpoken in former times, calling the puniſhment of Sin and Diſobedience, *Death*; as that comprehends all Curſing and Miſery: and the reward of Righteouſneſs and Obedience, *Life:* As that encludes and containes, as we have ſaid, all Bleſſing and Happineſs whatſoever, of which they ſhall be made capable, *Rom.* 6. 23. with *Deut.* 30, 15, 16, 19, 20. *Ezek.* 33. 11. And ſo we may ſay of all, who continue to exerciſe themſelves to true Piety.

1. That though they muſt needs all of them dye, as well as other men; yet they ſhall in due ſeaſon, be *Raiſed again to the Reſurrection of Life*, John 5. 29. Luk. 14. 14. *They that are Chriſt's*, in a ſpecial conſideration, *ſhall be quickned at his coming*, John 11. 25.

11. 25. 1 Cor. 6. 14. and *chap.* 15. 23. Our *Lord Jeſus* is the *Reſurrection* and the *Life*; and *He hath the Keys of the Grave, and of Death*, Rev. 1. 18. And therewith he will, in the proper ſeaſon, open the Gates of Death, and the Doors of the Grave; and will bring them forth that ſleep in him, to the compleat enjoyment, of that Glory and Happineſs, which he hath, by his precious Blood, obtained for them, and Promiſed to them: and will then give unto them Spiritual, Powerful, and Immortal Bodies; ſo as then they *Can dye no more, for they are equal unto the Angels, and are the Children of God, being the Children of the Reſurrection*, Luk. 20. 35, 36. *For this Corruptible*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul, muſt put on Incorruption; and this mortall muſt put on Immortality*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 15. 53, 55, 58. Then their *Body*, which is now *Vile, ſhall be faſhioned into the Likeneſs of the Glorious Body of Chriſt*, Phil. 3. 20, 21.

2. *Eternal Life*, by our bleſſed Saviour, *is oppoſed unto*, and ſet againſt, *Condemnation*, *Joh.* 5. 24. and *chap.* 3. 15, 16. with *ver.* 18. and ſo it doth ſignifie, or however enclude *Juſtification*; (for theſe two, to wit, Juſtification and Condemnation, are very uſually oppoſed the one to the other, *Rom.* 5. 18. and *chap.* 8. 33, 34. 2 *Cor.* 3. 9.) And ſo, thoſe that now do live Godly and Righ-

teouſly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall, in the World to come, of which we ſpeak, be compleatly Glorioufly, and eternally *Juſtified* from all their Sins and Tranſgreſſions, *Iſa.* 45. 23, 25. *Their Sins ſhall be* fully and everlaſtingly *Blotted out, when the times of Refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord,* Act. 3. 19. Now they are inſtructed and directed by our Lord Jeſus, and need to pray unto their Father which is in Heaven, every day, *Forgive us our Sins* and Treſpaſſes; for they are daily offending and *ſinning againſt God,* Matth. 6. 12. who can tell how oft he offendeth? There is not a *Juſt man upon the Earth that doeth good, and ſinneth not,* Eccl. 7. 20. But then they ſhall ſin no more, but ſhall be juſtified and cleanſed (as *Dan.* 8. 14.) from the Inherency and In-being of Sin; and they ſhall alſo perfectly and for ever be forgiven, and delivered from the Guilt of their former Tranſgreſſions and Miſcarriages, *Iſa.* 45. 25. with *Heb.* 8. 10, 12. He commanded us, ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter,* to Preach unto the People, and to teſtify, *That it is He* (Chriſt) *who is Ordained of God the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the Prophets Witneſs, that through his Name, whoſoever Believeth in him, ſhall receive* (in the future Judgment) *Remiſſion of Sins,* Act. 10. 40, 43.

3. The truly Godly and Righteous perſons

ſons ſhall, when they are raiſed again out of their Graves, be wholly, and for ever *delivered* from the *wrath* and diſpleaſure of the Almighty God: and ſo *Eternal life is* oppoſed unto the *wrath of God*, by the *Baptiſt*, when he thus ſpeaketh, *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting Life; and he that obeyeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him*, John 3. 3, 6. So alſo the Apoſtle doth oppoſe *Eternal Life, and Wrath*, each to other, ſaying; *to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory*, He will render *eternal Life: But unto them that obey not the Truth*, he will render *Indignation* and *Wrath*, *Rom.* 2. 7, 8. ſee alſo, *Prov.* 16. 14, 15. And ſo, they that now are Pious and Pure in heart and way, ſhall then *obtain* and *enjoy* his valuable *Favour*, *in which is life*, *Pſal.* 30. 5. yea his *loving kindneſs is better than Life*; than the moſt excellent life we can here enjoy, *Pſal.* 63. 3. Then ſhall that promiſe, which the Faithful God hath promiſed to them, be compleatly and moſt fully performed; to wit, *For a moment have I forſaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment: but with everlaſting kindneſs, will I have mercy upon thee*, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer; *For this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me: for as I have ſworn,*

that the waters of Noah, *ſhall no more go over the earth; ſo have I ſworn, that I will not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. This is the Heritage of the ſervants of the Lord,* &c. *Iſa.* 54. 7, 8, 9, 10. 17.

4. *Eternal Life* is oppoſed unto *Everlaſting fire,* and unto *everlaſting puniſhment, Matth.* 25. 41, 46. And ſo it may ſignifie the ſame with *Everlaſting Salvation:* And our Lord Jeſus, being made perfect, *Became the Author of eternal Salvation, unto all them that obey him,* Heb. 5. 8, 9. *Whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life,* John 3. 15, 16. and *chap.* 10. 27, 28. They that now run, with patience and perſeverance, the way of God's Commandments, ſhall hereafter, unto all Eternity, be delivered from the dreadful and direful effects, of the Wrath of the Almighty God, which is to be dreaded and deprecated by us; they ſhall then fully, and for ever be ſecured from all Torment, Deſtruction, and perdition, *Iſa.* 45. 16, 17.

Everlaſting Life is alſo oppoſed unto *Shame, Reproach,* and *Diſgrace:* As where the Prophet ſaith, *Many of them that ſleep in the duſt of the earth ſhall awake; ſome to everlaſting Life; and ſome to Shame, and everlaſting Contempt,* Dan 12. 2. And ſo in that future ſtate, which the Godly ſhall enter upon, they ſhall certainly

certainly and perpetually, be delivered from all Infamy and Contempt: though now many times they are a Reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the People; and are a By-word amongſt their Neighbours: and therefore may ſay as the *Pſalmiſt* doth; *Thou haſt known our Reproach and our Shame, and our Diſhonour: ——Reproach hath broken our hearts*, &c. *Pſal.* 69. 19, 20. yet hereafter, Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved in the Lord with an everlaſting ſalvation; they ſhall not be Aſhamed, nor Confounded, world without end*, Iſa. 45. 17. But they ſhall then obtain, and be made partakers of everlaſting Glory, and immortal Honour, unto which they are now called by the Goſpel. *When Chriſt, who is our Life, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in Glory*, Col. 3. 1, 4. *Then*, ſaith our Lord Jeſus, *ſhall the Righteous ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father; who hath ears to hear, let him hear*, Matth. 13. 44. 2 Tim. 2, 10. For their former Shame, they ſhall then have double Glory, *Iſa.* 61. 7.

And again; *Eternal life* is ſometimes oppoſed unto the *Place* of *Torment*, into which the unrighteous and unholy ſhall go; and in which will be *Weeping*, and *Wailing*, and *Gnaſhing of teeth*, Mark. 9. 43, 46. And ſo alſo it is oppoſed unto *Anguiſh*, and diſmal Grief, which is the effect of the Wrath and

Indignation of the moſt Righteous Judge; *Rom.* 2. 7. with *ver.* 8, 9. And they that now lead their lives in ſincere Piety, and Honeſty, ſhall hereafter be delivered from all occaſions of weeping, and wailing; and ſhall be made partakers of everlaſting Joy, Gladneſs, and Conſolation: as the Lord, by the Prophet, gives us to underſtand, ſaying; *The Redeemed of the Lord ſhall return, and come with ſinging unto* Zion, *and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their Heads: they ſhall obtain Gladneſs and Joy, and Sorrow and Mourning ſhall flee away,* Iſa 35. 10. and *chap.* 51. 11. *Light is now ſown for the Righteous, and Gladneſs for the upright in heart, Pſal.* 97. 11, 12. And even now, while as their need requires, they are in heavineſs, through manifold Temptations; yet believing in Chriſt Jeſus, whom now they ſee not, they rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of Glory: they greatly rejoyce in that Salvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt times, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 6, 8, 9. But their preſent joy is not without mixture of ſorrow; *They now rejoyce with trembling,* Hab. 3. 16, 18. And their joy is not compleat, becauſe it is in unſeen things: but hereafter, *God will wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there ſhall be no more ſorrow, nor crying: for the former things are paſſed away.* And he that ſate upon

upon the Throne ſaid unto me, ſaith St. *John, Write, For theſe words are true and faithful*, *Rev.* 21. 1, 4, 5. And then they ſhall for evermore, Reap that Harveſt of unmixed joy and light, which is now ſown for them: they ſhall enter into the joy of their Lord: when they are abſent from the Body, they ſhall be preſent with the Lord; and ſhall for ever be in his Bleſſed and Glorious Preſence, *In whoſe Preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand are Pleaſures for evermore*, Matth. 25. 21, 23. 2 *Cor.* 5. 6, 8. *Rev.* 22. 4. And if now they greatly rejoyce, in hope and expectation of the Glory of God, which now they ſee not, nor fully enjoy, *Rom.* 8. 24, 25. what will their joy and rejoycing be, when they have a compleat, glorious, and never-ending enjoyment and fruition, of what they now in this day, longingly and patiently expect and wait for?

5. Sometimes *Eternal life* is declared to conſiſt in *the Knowledg of God*, and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: as our Lord gives us to underſtand, in his Addreſs to his Father, ſaying unto Him; *This is life Eternal, that they know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*, John 17. 2, 3. with 1 *John* 5. 20, 21. Indeed, that imperfect and ſmall knowledge of God, and Jeſus Chriſt, which they now have, while they are

abſent

abſent from the Lord, is very ſweet and delightful: *My Son*, ſaith the *Wiſe-man*, *eat thou honey, becauſe it is Good, and the honey combe which is ſweet upon thy palate: ſo ſhall the knowledge of Wiſdom be unto thy ſoul, when thou haſt found it*, *Prov.* 2. 10. and *chap.* 24. 13, 14. It is called, *The light of the knowledge* of the glory of God, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4, 6. And *Light*, and *Underſtanding*, and *Excellent Wiſdom*, are put together, *Dan* 5. 11, 14. to ſignifie, that what *Light is* to the outward man, knowledge and wiſdom is to the Inner, even to the ſoul: *And truly the light is ſweet; and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun*, Eccl. 11. 7. But if that very ſmall, and little meaſure of knowledg and underſtanding, which the Saints now partake of, be ſo grateful and pleaſant; how ſweet, ſatisfactory, and raviſhing will be the perfect and compleat knowledge they ſhall enjoy, and be made partakers of, in the future ſtate they ſhall enter upon! *We now know in part*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *and we Prophecy in part*; *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away.*—— *For now we ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then ſhall I know, even as alſo I am known*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10, 12. And through the preſent perfect ſight and knowledg of our

Lord

Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they ſhall alſo be compleatly conformed to his moſt excellent Image and Likeneſs, which is now effected in part, through the imperfect ſight of him: as it is ſaid; *We all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 2 Cor. 3. 12, 18. But when they ſhall behold him without a glaſs, when they ſhall ſee him eye to eye, (as *Iſa.* 52. 8.) they ſhall then be perfectly made like unto him. To this purpoſe the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks to the believers, ſaying; *Now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear* (to wit, to themſelves fully) *what we ſhall be: But we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him: for we ſhall ſee him as he is,* 1 John 3. 2, 3. *Matth.* 5: 8. *Iſa.* 33. 15, 16, 17.

6. Sometimes by *the life to come,* is meant, that Kingdome, or reigning ſtate, that is propoſed to and ſet before us in the Goſpel, to move and excite us to *exerciſe* our ſelves, ſeriouſly and conſtantly, to *Godlineſs* and Righteouſneſs; and which Crown of Glory, they ſhall undoubtedly receive, who run the ways of Gods commandments, with diligence and perſeverance: Thus whereas in two verſes in *Mark,* 9. we have theſe expreſſions, uſed by our Lord Jeſus, *It is better for thee to enter*

enter into life: In another verſe, in the ſame place, it is thus expreſſed; *It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdome of God*, &c. verſ. 43, 45. with verſ. 47. Thus alſo it is ſaid of them, which receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, that *they ſhall reign in life by one, Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 5. 17. And the *Future life*, the life to come, which is promiſed to the unfeigned believers, is called, *The Crown of life:* ſo it is ſaid, *When he is tried, he ſhall receive the Crown of Life* (elſe-where called by the ſame Apoſtle, *The Kingdom*) *which the Lord hath promiſed unto them that love him*, Jam. 1. 12. with chap. 2. 5. And our Lord ſaith unto the Angel of the Church in *Smyrna*, *Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of life*, Rev. 2. 10. And ſo, this is contained in the future life, which is promiſed unto Godlineſs, that they that now hear Chriſts voice, and follow him, ſhall then be exalted to inherit a Kingdome, *Luk.* 12. 32. As the holy ones confeſs, to the praiſe of the *Lamb that was ſlain*, ſaying, *Thou haſt made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts, and we ſhall Reign on the earth*, Rev. 5. 9, 10. Rom. 2. 9, 10. *And they ſhall Reign for ever and ever*, Rev. 22. 5.

7. And laſtly, ſometimes *life*, and *eternal life*, are oppoſed to *Corruption*, and *Mortality:* thus the Apoſtle ſaith, *That Mortality may*

be

be ſwallowed up of life, 2 Cor. 5. 4. Gal. 6. 8. And *life* is joyned with *Immortality*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. And ſo it ſignifies, *an endleſs life*; and therewith an everlaſting deliverance from all wrath, death, pain, puniſhment, enemies, ſhame, weeping and grief, *&c.* And an eternal enjoyment and poſſeſſion of all Glory, Honour, Peace, Joy, and compleat bliſs and happineſs: as we have intimated all along, in what we have written; and as is alſo imported to us in the very *Phraſe of everlaſting*, or *eternal life*, Heb. 7. 16. Pſal. 133. 3. and 36. 7, 9.

Thus I have given ſome ſhort and very imperfect account, of what is meant by and contained in, *the life to come*, of which *Godlineſs hath the promiſe*; of which the Apoſtles themſelves have, not onely known, but alſo *Propheſied in part*, in thoſe excellent things ſpoken and written by them: and then, how ſhould ſuch a Child in underſtanding as I am, do otherwiſe then darken it, by words without knowledge? 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 12, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2. *Iſa.* 64. 4. with 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 10. *Pſal.* 31. 19. And we ſhall hereafter ſee cauſe, to uſe the words of the Queen of *Sheba*, concerning this *eternal life* and Salvation: namely, *It was a true report that we heard of it* from the holy Prophets and Apoſtles: *Howbeit,* ——*Behold, the half was not told us by them*;

them; this life and immortality *exceeds the ſame which we have heard of it*, 1 King. 10. 6, 7, 8. But no more to that.

3. We come in the laſt place to *evidence* and ſhew, that *Godlineſs hath*, and thoſe that unfeignedly and preſeveringly *exerciſe themſelves thereto*, have *the promiſe* alſo *of the life to come*; of this moſt excellent, deſirable, and eternally happy and bleſſed ſtate; of which we have before given ſome broken, imperfect, and brief account. To this purpoſe the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks, in the preſence of King *Agrippa*, and ſome other great perſons, ſaying; *And now I ſtand, and am judged for the hope of the promiſe, made of God unto our Fathers:* (to wit, the promiſe of a bleſſed and joyful reſurrection from the dead; and of an everlaſtingly happy ſtate afterwards, which was made unto *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, &c. Gen. 22. 7. Exod. 3. 6. with Luk. 20. 35, 36, 38. Act. 24. 14, 16. Heb. 11. 9, 10, 13, 16. *Unto which promiſe*, ſaith he, *our twelve Tribes, inſtantly ſerving God day and night, hope to come.* (Intimating, that they rightly judged and concluded, that no perſons could enjoy the compleat benefit of that promiſe, made unto the Fathers, but ſuch as were ſincerely pious, and devout perſons; ſuch as walked in the ſteps of the Faith of our Father *Abraham:* And therefore they did inſtantly,

inſtantly, and conſtantly ſerve God, in holineſs and righteouſneſs; that they might enjoy the benefits and bleſſings of that promiſe.) *Act.* 26. 6, 7, 8. *Pſal.* 119. 166. To the ſame purpoſe alſo the Apoſtle *James*, ſpeaking concerning them that were *Rich in faith*, though poor in this world, ſaith of them, that they are *Heirs of that Kingdom which God hath promiſed unto them that love him*, Jam. 1. 12. and *ch.* 2. 5. And the Apoſtle *John*, writing unto them that did believe in the name of the Son of God, in general, ſaith: *Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning: If that which ye have heard from the beginning, ſhall remain in you, ye alſo ſhall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promiſe that he hath promiſed us, even eternal life*, 1 Joh. 2. 24, 25. Rev. 2. 7, 10, 11. and *chap.* 22. 12, 14. This promiſe, as we have ſaid before, is *conditionally* propounded and aſſured unto all, however, where the Goſpel of Chriſt is plainly taught and proclaimed; that upon their performing the conditions of the New-Covenant, by the help and aſſiſtance of the bleſſed ſpirit of God, (which he will not be wanting to give them *preventingly*) they might be made partakers of the bleſſings, therein aſſured and promiſed: *For ſo God loved the world*, (of fallen, ſinfull mankind)

kind) *that he gave his onely begotten Son*; (namely, to be the Saviour of it) *That whosoever* (of the world) *believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life*, Joh. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 35, 36. and *chap.* 5 24, 25, 40. Iſa. 55. 1, 2, 3. But they onely are the Heirs of it, (I now ſpeak of adult ones) and ſhall aſſuredly receive and enjoy, the choice and everlaſting benefits of it, who do exerciſe themſelves unto true and ſincere Godlineſs and Goodneſs; and continue ſo to do unto the end of their lives; for they do perform the terms and conditions of that New-Covenant. *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour*, and *Immortality*, God will render *eternal life*, Rom. 2. 7, 10. Hence the Apoſtle thus intreats, exhorts, and encourages the believing *Hebrews*, ſaying unto them: *And we deſire, that every one of you do ſhew the ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not ſlothful, but followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the promiſes*, Heb. 6. 11, 12. And again he ſaith unto the ſame believers, *Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promiſes*, chap. 10. 36, 38. But having mentioned ſomewhat to the ſame purpoſe before, in the fore-going part of this diſcourſe;

diſcourſe; and thereby prevented my ſelf, from further enlarging thereto here; I ſhall adde no more unto it.

Onely for our further helpfulneſs and encouragement, we may enquire into, and conſider theſe two things; namely,

1. *Whoſe is this promiſe* that is aſſured *unto Godlineſs*; and conſequently unto them, that ſincerely exerciſe themſelves thereto?

2. *How is this moſt excellent promiſe confirmed* and eſtabliſhed, that we may firmly expect to receive the bleſſings thereof, upon our exerciſing our ſelves to true Piety and Holineſs?

1. *Whoſe is this promiſe* that is aſſured unto *Godlineſs*; and conſequently unto them, that ſincerely and perſeveringly exerciſe themſelves thereto? Or who is he that hath promiſed *eternal life* to the truely Godly and Holy perſons? And he is, *The living God*; as he is ſtyled in *verſ.* 10. He that liſts up his hand unto heaven, and ſaith, *I live for ever*, Deut. 32. 40. *That God who onely hath immortality*, 1 Tim. 6. 16. And him we may further conſider:

1. As a *Gracious and merciful God*; one who is full of tender bowels of compaſſion and affection to mankind, *Tit.* 3. 4. Jam. 5. 11. Eſpecially towards them that hear-

tily ſeek, and ſerve him: as the Apoſtle alſo ſignifies, in what he ſaith of *the living God* in *verſ.* 10. Namely, that *he is the Saviour of all men, but eſpecially of them that believe.* His Charity and Mercy moved him to promiſe his dear Son, from the beginning of the world, to be the Saviour of the world: and in the fulneſs of the time to ſend him, according as he had before-promiſed: whom he hath given *For a Covenant of the people,* Iſa. 42. 6. *Through the tender mercies of our God, the day-ſpring from on high viſited us: To give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death,* Luk. 1. 70, 80. Iſa. 55 3, 4. And he hath by the grace of God taſted death for every man, and is raiſed again from the dead; and hath by his precious blood obtained and ratified the New Teſtament, of exceeding great and precious promiſes, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. And this everliving and true God, who hath ſo greatly, and wonderfully manifeſted, the ſincerity of his love and kindneſs towards us, in ſending his well-beloved, and onely begotten Son, to be the Propitiation for our ſins, doth ſtill *keep mercy* toward the Heirs of his promiſe; otherwiſe they could not be made partakers of the bleſſings and benefits of his Covenant. Hence we have frequently ſuch expreſſions as theſe made uſe of in the holy Scriptures;

Scriptures; to wit, *The great and dreadful God, who keepeth Covenant and mercy for them that love him, and obſerve his Commandments,* Deut. 7. 9. Neh. 1. 5. Dan. 9. 4. *All the Paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto ſuch as keep his Covenant, and his Teſtimonies,* Pſal. 25. 10. *He retaineth not his Anger for ever: becauſe he delighteth in mercy.—Thou wilt caſt all their ſins into the depths of the Sea. Thou wilt perform the truth unto* Jacob, *and the mercy to* Abraham, Mica. 7. 18,20. If God ſhould be ſevere to Mark againſt the pious and righteous perſons, the manifold iniquities and miſcarriages found with them, both in their Omitting that which is good, and Committing that which is evil, they could not ſtand before him, nor receive the benefits of his promiſes, *Pſal.* 130. 4, 5. And as that perfect man *Job* ſaith, *how ſhould man be juſt before God?* (namely, if he ſhould enter into judgment with him: for ſo it immediately follows;) *If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand,* Job 9. 2, 3. with Pſal. 143. 2.

And therefore ſuch as are upright in the main, need to Rejoyce in, and Implore the mercy of God daily and continually: And it is obſervable, that *David,* the man after Gods own heart, thus expreſſeth himſelf; *I will ſing of thy Power, yea I will ſing aloud of*

thy Mercy, &c. *Pſal.* 59. 16, 17. And again he ſaith, *I will ſing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever*, Pſal. 89. 1, 4. And when he thus ſpeaks of himſelf, in his Prayer unto God, ſaying, *I have done Judgment and Juſtice*; and doth acknowledge himſelf to be *The Servant of the Lord*; to wit, in an eſpecial conſideration; one that did deſire to fear his name, and to ſerve and pleaſe him; yet then he humbly and earneſtly Implores the mercy of God, ſaying, *Deal with thy Servant according to thy Mercy*, Pſal. 119. 121, 124, 125, and 143. 2. And *Daniel*, a man greatly beloved of his God, and an eminently Holy man, doth thus addreſs himſelf unto God in his Prayer; *We do not preſent our Supplications before thee for our Righteouſneſs, but for thy great Mercies. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do*, Dan. 9. 7, 9, 18, 19. with *Iſa.* 64. 6. And when the Apoſtle *Jude* gives this counſel and exhortation unto the Believers, who were Sanctified in God the Father, and Preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus, and Called: to wit, *But ye, Beloved, Building up your ſelves on your moſt Holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep your ſelves in the love of God:* He then Immediately further adds thereto, *Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto Eternal Life.* To ſignify to us; that the moſt

moſt upright and holy Ones, do continually ſtand in need of the Mercy of God, and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and without that, they could not have Eternal Life, *Jude* 1. 2, 20, 21. *Heb.* 4. 16. *Luke* 17. 9, 10. *The Mercy of the Lord is from Everlaſting to Everlaſting upon them that fear him*, Pſal. 103. 17, 18. with 52. 8. *Where is Boaſting then? It is excluded. By what Law? Of Works? Nay, but by the Law of Faith*, Rom. 3. 25, 26, 27.

Yet let none, from what hath been ſaid, *Abuſe the Mercy and Grace of God*, (as evil ones are two forward and prone to do, *Rom.* 5. and *chap.* 6 1, 2.) and cry *Peace* to themſelves, *Where there is no Peace*: For though it be certainly true, that God is a God of Mercy towards mankind, rich in Mercy, the Father and Fountain of Mercies, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *Epheſ.* 2. 4, 5. yet he will not be merciful, in an eſpecial conſideration, *To any wicked trangreſſors*, Pſal. 59. 5. *He that made them will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will ſhew them no Favour*: I mean, if they continue, and go on ſtill in their Treſpaſſes, *Iſa.* 27. 11. *Pſal.* 68 18, 21. But this is a very great and conſiderable encouragement to them, whoſe hearts are perfect with the Lord; That he who hath entail'd the Promiſe on Godlineſs, is one who delights in mer-

cy; And therefore he will perform the Covenant to them that keep his Teſtimonies, and ſeek him with the whole heart; though they be ſubject to Paſſions, and have many Infirmities and Frailties found with them; in their due and diligent addreſſing themſelves to the Throne of Grace, that they may obtain mercy, in the forgiveneſs of their Sins: Theſe are *The Veſſels of ſpecial Mercy, which he hath prepared unto Glory*, Rom. 9. 23. with 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. Hence the Apoſtle *Paul* thus votes, *As many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be upon them, and Mercy, even upon the* Iſrael *of God*, *Gal.* 6. 14, 15, 16. *Heb.* 8. 10, 11, 12.

2. *The God whoſe the Promiſe is* that *Godlineſs hath*, is alſo a *God of Ability* and *Power*; one who is ſtrong and able to perform all his Gracious Promiſes: And ſo he is able to give unto the truly Pious Perſons now, thoſe things which he knows to be needful for them, for this preſent Life and State: Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is his, *Job* 41. 11. *Thine, O Lord*, ſaith *David, is the Greatneſs, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majeſty: For all that is in the Earth, is thine: Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both Riches and Honour come of thee*, &c. 1 *Chron.* 29. 11, 13. *Deut.*

Deut. 10. 14. He can open his good Treaſure, and give unto us, out of *that*, whatſoever is needful and uſeful for the Body and outward man, as, *Deut.* 28. 1, 12.

And ſo alſo the *Heaven*, and all *Heavenly things* are his, in his hand, and at his Diſpoſe, 1 *Chron.* 29. 11. *Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, is the Lords*, Deut. 10. 14. Pſal. 115. 16. And ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath Bleſſed us with all Spiritual Bleſſings, in Heavenly things, in Chriſt Jeſus*, Eph. 1. 3. *Jam.* 1. 5, 17. *Luk.* 11. 13. Thus God in former times, made known himſelf to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, *by the Name of God Almighty*, Gen. 17. 1. Exod. 6. 3. And *Abraham glorified God*, in believing him to be ſuch an one as he made himſelf known by his Word to be; namely, the *Powerful*, the *Almighty God*; and that therefore he could give a Being to his word, and and perform the Promiſe, which he had made unto him, notwithſtanding all appearing difficulties, and unlikelyhoods: So when the Lord promiſed him, ſaying, *So ſhall thy Seed be*; It is ſaid by the Apoſtle, *He conſidered not his Body now dead, neither yet the deadneſs of* Sarahs *Womb. He ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God. And being*

fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform, Rom. 4. 18, 21. There were ſome ſtaggerings at that Promiſe of God, as to his Ability to perform it, in *Sarah*, it may ſeem, for which ſhe was ſomewhat reproved by the Lord, in his thus ſpeaking unto *Abraham*; *Wherefore did* Sarah *laugh? Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* Gen. 18. 13, 14. But no ſuch thing was charged upon her Husband. And again when the Lord tried *Abraham*, commanding him to *Offer up his Son*, his only Son *Iſaac*, *for a Burnt-Offering*; concerning which Son, the Lord had thus promiſed, *In* Iſaac *ſhall thy Seed be called*, Rom. 9. 7. yet *Faithful Abraham* ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God, but did firmly believe, that he was able to perform what he had promiſed; though in obedience to God, he did offer up his Son. Hence it is ſaid; *By Faith* Abraham, *when he was tried, offered up* Iſaac: *And he that had received the Promiſes, offered up his only begotten Son, accounting that God was able to raiſe him up even from the dead: From whence alſo he received him in a Figure*, Heb. 11. 17, 20. And He is the ſame God ſtill, and is able to do for us exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask, or think, according to the Power that worketh in us, *Eph.* 3. 20, 21. as St. *Paul* ſaith, *I know*

whom

whom I have believed: *and I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him, againſt that day*, 2 Tim. 1. 12.

He is not only able to give us the things which are good and needful for the mortal Body, 2 *Chron* 25, 9. but alſo to raiſe up this body again, when it is dead, and laid in the Grave, and turned to corruption. *Why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?* Acts 26. 8. Indeed, it might well be thought a thing incredible, and impoſſible, that any mere Creature, ſhould effect this great and wonderful work; But is any thing impoſſible unto, or too hard for the Lord? Cannot he who at the firſt Created all things of nothing, raiſe up this Body again when it is diſſolved, and turned to duſt and rottenneſs, and reunite it to its proper Soul and Spirit? yes, without all peradventure he can do it, and will do it, in due ſeaſon. *God hath both raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, and will Raiſe up us alſo by his own Power*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 14. with *Epheſ.* 1. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 1. 9, 10. Though *Chriſt was Crucified through weakneſs, yet he liveth by the Power of God:* For we alſo are weak in him, *But we ſhall live with him by the Power of God*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 4. He is able to change and transform theſe vile, duſty bo-

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dies, into excellent ones; to make theſe bodies which are corruptible, weak, diſhonourable, Natural bodies; to become Spiritual, Glorious, Powerful, and Incorruptible bodies, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 44, 48, 49, 53, 54. *He ſhall change our vile Body*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf*, Phil. 3. 21. And ſo he hath power to deliver us from the *In-being of ſin*, and from all our ſpots and Faults; and will do ſo perfectly in the Reſurrection from the dead, *Eph.* 5. 25, 27. He is able to keep the Believers from falling, now in this day; and hereafter, even in the reſurrection of the juſt, *To preſent them faultleſs before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy*, Jude 24. 25. Yea in ſhort, He is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, who do ſincerely ſeek and ſerve him; and to make them partakers gloriouſly *of Eternal Life*; as it is before ſpoken to, and in ſome weak and imperfect meaſure opened and explained. And he hath given his Son, our Lord Jeſus, Power to give unto them Eternal Life: he hath already given us (mankind) in his Son, Eternal Life: hence the Apoſtle *John* ſaith, *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, becauſe he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record*

record that God hath given to us Eternal life: and this life is in his Son, 1 John 5. 10, 11. And not only hath he ſo done; but he hath alſo impowred his Son to make them partakers of this Eternal life, who hear his voice, and diligently and conſtantly follow him; now in a firſt-fruits by faith, and hereafter fully, in the glorious enjoyment and fruition of it: As our Saviour in his addreſs to his Father, ſignifieth, ſaying; *Thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as many, as thou haſt given him,* John 17. 2. with *chap.* 10. 27, 28.

Now this is a very powerful and forcible encouragement, to encourage and ſtrengthen us to expect the performance of the exceeding great and excellent promiſes, which he hath made unto Godlineſs; and ſo unto us, upon our ſincerely exerciſing our ſelves thereunto; and patiently continuing ſo to do; that he who hath promiſed, is a God of infinite and eternal power; and ſo able, to accompliſh whatever he hath promiſed. If men make promiſes, and intend really to perform them, yet there may be, and oftentimes is, a failure found with them therein; becauſe though their wills and purpoſes, be never ſo ſtrong and firm, yet their Hand and Power, is very ſhort and weak: But it is not ſo with the Lord our God; his Hand

is

is not ſhortned at all, but *Power* doth belong unto him, as well as with him is *Mercy*. Pſal 62. 11, 12. *In thine hand is there not Power and Might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee?* 2 Chron. 20. 6. He that hath made theſe *Promiſes to Godlineſs* (and unto them that ſincerely exerciſe themſelves thereto, who walk before him, and are perfect) is, the Lord Almighty, *Gen.* 17. 1, 8. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 18. with *chap.* 7. 1.

3. *And he who hath entail'd the promiſe on Godlineſs*, is alſo a God of *Righteouſneſs* and *Truth*, and who will therefore undoubtedly perform his good word: he is *abundant in Goodneſs and Truth*, Exod. 34. 6. Thus when *Moſes* ſaith, *I will publiſh the Name of the Lord*; he preſently thus proclaims it, *He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are Judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he*, Deut 32. 3, 4. And he thus ſpeaks unto *Iſrael*, ſaying: *Know therefore that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, that keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him*, &c. Deut. 7. 9, 11. And thus, in due ſeaſon, he evidenced himſelf to be, in accomplishing that promiſe, which he made unto his ancient people, in bringing them into, and poſſeſſing them of, *the Typical reſt*, the land of *Canaan:* Hence it is ſaid, *The Lord*

Lord gave them reſt round about, according to all that he ſwear unto our Fathers: ——*there failed not ought of any good thing, which the Lord had ſpoken unto the houſe of* Iſrael; *all came to paſs,* Joſh. 21. 43, 45. *and* chap. 23. 14, 15. And now he hath moſt clearly and comfortably manifeſted his truth and faithfulneſs, in ſending his well-beloved Son into the World, that we might live through him; and in not ſparing his own Son, but delivering him up for us all; and in lifting him up again from the gates of Death. This he promiſed from the beginning of the World, long before the proper ſeaſon (for the actual accompliſhment of it) came: But his promiſe did not fail for evermore: *But when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law,* Luke 1. 69, 72. Gal. 4. 5. Hence the Apoſtle ſaith, *of Davids Seed* hath God, *according to his promiſe, Raiſed unto* Iſrael *a Saviour,* JESUS. And again he ſaith, *We declare unto you glad Tydings, how that the Promiſe, which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the ſame unto us their Children, in that he raiſed up Jeſus again,* &c. Act. 13. 23, 32, 33. And therefore, without all doubt, he will faithfully do and perform whatſoever he hath promiſed.

God

God is faithful, by whom ye were called to the Fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, ſaith St. *Paul,* 1 Cor. 1. 8, 9. *All men have not Faith:* Too too many of them do falſify their Word, and fail in Performing their Promiſes and Engagements: *But God is faithful,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *who will eſtabliſh you, and keep you from evil,* 1 Theſ. 5. 23, 24. 2 Theſ. 3. 2, 3. 1 Cor. 10. 13, 14. and from the conſideration of the *Fidelity* of God, the Apoſtle thus exhorts the believing *Hebrews,* ſaying, *Let us hold faſt the Profeſſion of our Faith without wavering: For he is faithful that Promiſed. And let us conſider one another, to provoke unto Love, and to good Works: not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together,* &c. Heb. 10. 23, 25. Thus when the Lord promiſed *Abraham* a Son in his old Age, by aged *Sarah,* who was as good as dead; though ſhe did ſomewhat doubt, through her weakneſs and infirmity, of God's ability to perform this promiſe of his, as we noted before: yet ſhe was verily and firmly perſwaded of his Truth and Faithfulneſs, as *Abraham* was of the Greatneſs and Almightineſs of his Power: and therefore it is ſaid by the Apoſtle; *By faith Sarah her ſelf received ſtrength to conceive ſeed,* and was delivered of a child, when ſhe was paſt the time of age; *Becauſe ſhe judged him faithful who had promi-*

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ſted, Heb. 11. 11. And it is the ſame living, and ever-living God, and who is *ſtedfaſt for ever*, (as, Dan. 6. 26.) who hath promiſed all uſeful and *profitable* things unto *Godlineſs*; and unto them that do uprightly apply and exerciſe themſelves thereto, for this preſent Tranſitory life and ſtate: and who hath alſo promiſed an eternally, excellent, and bleſſed ſtate hereafter, unto them that Piouſly and Purely walk before him, and *run with patience to the end of their Chriſtian race*, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *And he is not a man that he ſhould lye; nor the Son of man, that he ſhould repent: Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Numb. 23. 19, 20. Hence the Apoſtle ſtyles himſelf, *A ſervant of God, and an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt*;---*In hope of eternal life*, which God that cannot lye promiſed, *before the world began*: or rather, as it is alſo in the Greek, *before the Secular*, or *Agey times*, Tit. 1. 1, 2. O then! Let us ſo believingly and ſeriouſly conſider theſe *three attributes* of him, who liveth for ever and ever, *whoſe promiſe Godlineſs hath*, both for this preſent life that now is, and for that which is to come; that far more excellent and deſirable one; namely, his *Mercifulneſs*, *Almightineſs*, & *Faithfulneſs*; that *abſtaining from, and denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we may live ſoberly*,

ſoberly, righteouſly, and Godly, in this preſent world: looking for the bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And ſo much as to that firſt *conſideration* fore-propounded.

2. Let us alſo carefully and diligently *conſider the promiſe it ſelf*, how it hath been ratified, eſtabliſhed, and confirmed; and ſo it will evidently appear to be *a faithful ſaying*, or word of promiſe, *Rom.* 9. 9. And therefore it deſerves to be highly embraced, and heartily entertained by us all: ſo much the Apoſtle gives us to underſtand in what he doth immediately ſubjoyn hereto; to wit, *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all Acceptation.* And ſo he gives the very ſame high Commendation of it, which he had given before of the firſt branch of the *myſtery of Godlineſs:* to wit, *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners,* &c. 1 Tim. 4. 8, 9. with *chap.* 1. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Tit. 3. 8. And this promiſe will evidently and undoubtedly appear to be a true and *faithful ſaying*; and therefore highly worthy to be believed, and embraced with all chearful and Honourable reſpect and acceptation

tation, if we duly conſider and weigh the two following particulars: that is to ſay;

1. That this promiſe which Godlineſs hath, is confirmed, and aſſured to us, by the *Oath* of the unchangeable and faithful God; and therefore, without all peradventure, it ſhall be performed unto all, that unfeignedly and conſtantly exerciſe themſelves to Piety and Holineſs. Thus when the Lord declares the Heritage of his upright and obedient ſervants, by his Prophet; he then ſaith concerning that Covenant made with them; *For this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me: for as I have ſworn, that the waters of* Noah *ſhall no more go over the earth; ſo have I ſworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the Mountaines ſhall depart, and the Hills be removed: but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the Covenant of my peace be removed,* ſaith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee, *Iſa.* 54. 7, 9, 10, 17. And the Apoſtle alſo, ſpeaking of the *Covenant* made with *Abraham*, for himſelf, and for his ſpiritual ſeed, even all ſuch as are of his faith, and walk in the good ſteps thereof, aſſureth us, that it was confirmed by an *Oath*; that we might confidently believe the firmneſs of it; and hopefully wait for, and expect the performance of it; for ſaith he, *When God made promiſe to* Abraham, *becauſe he could*

ſwear by no greater, he ſware by himſelf: ſaying; *Surely in bleſſing I will bleſs thee:*—— *for men verily ſwear by the greater, and an Oath of confirmation is to them an end of all gain-ſaying. Wherefore, God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the Heirs of promiſe, the immutability of his Counſel, interpoſed by an Oath, That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lye, we might have a ſtrong Conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope ſet before us,* Heb. 6. 12, 13, 17, 20. with *Gen.* 22. 16, 18. As with reſpect to the *New Covenant*, and the promiſes therein contained, we may ſay as the Pſalmiſt doth, *The Lord hath ſworn* that he will perform it, and them, according to the Tenour thereof, *and will not repent*, Pſal. 110. 4. and 132. 11.

2. This *New-Covenant* alſo, which is eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes than the *firſt* was, *Heb.* 8. 6. is ratified and made ſure by the moſt precious blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb without blemiſh, and without ſpot. Indeed, the *firſt Teſtament* was confirmed and Dedicated with blood; *For Moſes took the blood of Calves, and of Goats, with water and Hyſop, and ſprinkled the book,* ſaying, *This is the blood of the Teſtament, which God hath enjoyned unto you,* Exod. 24. 3, 8. with Heb. 9. 18, 20. But this better and far more excellent

excellent Covenant and Promiſe, which is entail'd on ſincere Piety, is ratified and eſtabliſhed by the blood of the Son of God, who is the *Mediatour of it*. Thus when our Lord Jeſus inſtituted his Supper, in the night in which he was betrayed; *He took the Cup, and gave it unto his Diſciples*, ſaying, *Drink ye all of it: for this is my Blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many, for the Remiſſion of Sins*, Matth. 26. 27, 28. This Teſtament of exceeding great and precious Promiſes, is confirmed by the Blood of himſelf, who is the *Teſtator: For where a Teſtament is, there muſt alſo of neceſſity be brought in the Death of the Teſtator. For a Teſtament is of force after men are dead: otherwiſe it is of no ſtrength at all, while the Teſtator liveth*, Heb. 9. 16, 17.

Hence this Covenant is called, *The New Teſtament in his Blood*, Luke 22. 20. 1 Cor. 11. 25. And his Blood is ſaid to be, *The Blood of the New Teſtament*, or *Covenant*, Mark. 14. 24. Heb. 10. 29. and *the Blood of the everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. And our Lord Jeſus, who hath obtained, ſealed, and ratified this New Teſtament with his own Death, is raiſed again from the Dead, and is now Alive, and lives for evermore; and is the Mediator of this New Covenant, to ſee to the faithful Execution and Performance

mance of his own laſt Will and Teſtament: As the Apoſtle ſaith; *And for this cauſe he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament: That by means of Death, for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions* that were *under the Firſt Teſtament, They which are called* (to wit, *called according to purpoſe*, ſo as they unfeignedly obey the call) *might receive the Promiſe of the eternal Inheritance*, Heb. 9. 14, 15. So that the *Promiſe* being thus *Confirmed*, by the *Oath* of the ever-living, and eternally unchangeable God; and by the *Blood* of the eternal and Immutable Son of God, (*Heb.* 13. 7, 8.) appears, hereby to be a faithful and true ſaying; and therefore, as we have ſaid, is worthy of all hearty and honourable Acceptation and Entertainment from us all.

To conclude all then in a few words, Let us all ſo careſully and ſeriouſly minde and conſider, the *General Gainfulneſs* of ſincere Piety and Goodneſs, both in this preſent State, which we are now in, and in that future and eternal State, which we muſt hereafter enter upon; which is fully and abundantly evidenced in this, that it hath the *Promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*: [illegible] that the *Author* and Maker of this *Prom[illegible] the living God*, the Incorruptible God, the moſt Merciful, moſt Power-

Powerful, and Faithful God: And that this Promiſe is aſcertained and confirmed by his moſt ſolemn Oath, to ſhew unto the Heirs of his Promiſe, the Immutability of his Counſel; and that it is alſo Ratified and Eſtabliſhed by the Precious Blood of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is *the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 7, 8. And *who ever liveth* to ſee to the performance of his Covenant and Promiſe, *Heb.* 1. 10, 12. that we may reſolvedly and conſtantly deny Impiety, and all ſinful and worldly luſts and affections, by the aid and aſſiſtance of the Spirit of Grace; leſt we come ſhort of enjoying the Benefit and advantage, of this excellent and moſt beneficial promiſe, as, *Heb.* 4. 1. And let us uprightly and perſeveringly follow after, and exerciſe our ſelves (not to the Form only, or mainly, but) to the Power and Practice of real Godlineſs; that ſo we may have an Intereſt in, and an enjoyment of, *The Gain and Advantage of Godlineſs*; both now in this preſent Day, and to the Day of Eternity. O let us not, by obſerving lying Vanities, which cannot ſave us from evil, nor ſatisfy us with good, forſake our own Mercies. God hath Inſeparably joyned together our *Duty*, and our *Intereſt*; that we cannot Poſſibly have the Latter, unleſs we ſincerely perform the Former: nor can we heartily exerciſe

our ſelves to the Former; but we ſhall, without all doubt, be made Partakers of the Latter. What God therefore hath ſo joyned together, let no man fondly imagine, or fooliſhly endeavour to put aſunder. As by annexing and aſſuring this general, and moſt valuable advantage to Godlineſs; God doth Intimate our backwardneſs, to exerciſe our ſelves thereto, and our averſeneſs therefrom: So in that he propoſes and promiſes ſuch a Reward to Piety, He doth plainly give us to underſtand, that it is his gracious Mind and Will, that we ſhould be Good and Pious, that we may be truly Bleſſed and Happy. We muſt indeed *take Chriſts Yoak* upon us, and unfeignedly undertake his ſervice, if we will meet with, and find *Refreſhing to our Souls*: But that we may heartily and willingly ſo do, He doth aſſure us, that it is an *eaſie*, that it is a *gainful* one: and ſo draws us, to take the *Yoke* upon us, with the *Bands* and *Cords* of *Profit* and *Advantage*, both *Earthly* and *Heavenly*: And thus he did *allure* his people, in former times, to the well-pleaſing ſervice of him, by aſſuring them, that it would conduce unto their own Advantage and Intereſt. *And now*, ſaith he by *Moſes*, *What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his wayes, and to love him*; *and*

to

to ſerve the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul: to keep the Commandments of the Lord, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day for thy Good? But for what Good ſhould they do this? ſurely, for their preſent, and for their future good; for their earthly, and for their heavenly advantage. And ſo much may be ſignified in what immediately follows, with a note of attention perfixed thereto: namely, *Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens is the Lords thy God; the Earth alſo, with all that therein is,* Deut. 10. 12, 13, 14. O then! Let us *Exerciſe our ſelves unto Godlineſs.---For Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having promiſe of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come. This is a Faithful ſaying, and worthy of all Acceptation.*

THE END.

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A Catechiſm according to the Church of *England.*

Nero Tragidea.

Cornelianum dolium.

Wilſons Catechiſm.

Elenchuus motuum nuperorum in Anglia.

Cackaines Poems.

Croſtons Fœlix Scelus; or proſpering-profaneneſs provoking holy conference, by *Zach. Croſton.*

Gramaticus Analyticus, by the ſame Author.

Alexanders advice to his Son.

N H. Excellency of Chriſt ſet forth.

Phelps Caveat againſt Drunkenneſs.

——— Lamentation for the loſs of a good man.

——— Antidote againſt deſperation.

Bury againſt Drunkenneſs.

Wadſworths laſt warning to Sinners.

Dr. *Wilkinſons* Counſels and Comforts to afflicted Conſciences.

Cappello and *Bianco*, a Romauce.

Calys Glimpſe of Eternity.

Period

Period of humane Life.

Defence of Period of humane Life, both written by the Author of the whole Duty of man, *&c.*

An Anſwer to the period of humane Life.

Survey Quakeriſm.

Tho. Vincents Explication of the Aſſemblies Catechiſm.

Vincent on *Prayer.*

——— On Converſion and day of Grace.

——— Covert from ſtorm.

——— Worthy Walking.

Parſons Letter to *VVem.*

Adams Catechiſm.

Lambs New Years Gift.

Perks way to mend the World.

Burys Antidote againſt the fear of Death.

Mr. *Corbets* Kingdom, God among men, with a Tract of Schiſm.

Self-imployment in Secret, by *John Corbet.*

Solomons Proverbs.

Traughtons Popery, the grand Apoſtacy.

Heywoods Chriſt diſplayed.

Biſhop *Reignolds Meditations.*

Mr. *Edward Weſts* Legacy.

Gerhard on Death.

Whole Duty of Youth.

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Ames Marrow Diuinity.

Tho. Vincent againſt the Quakers, being the ſandy Foundation ſhaken.

A warning to young men, or *Brinkhurſts* Narrative.

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Mr. *Kidders* help to smallest Children in their understanding of the Church-Catechism.

Thomas Vincents Himns.

Bartlet on the Sacrament.

Greens needful preparatory to the Lords Supper.

Dr. *Collings* of ordinary matter of Prayer.

Wilsons Childs Trade.

Scandreis Catechism.

Sheffields Catechism.

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Some brief Directions for the improvement of Infants Baptism.

Books Twelves.

Drexellius Repository.

Meads Spiritual Wisdom.

Nathanael Vincents little Childs Catechism,

The duty of Parents towards their Children.
A little book for little Children.
A method and instruction for the Art of divine Meditation. All three by *Tho. White.*

The considerations of *Drexelius* on Eternity.

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